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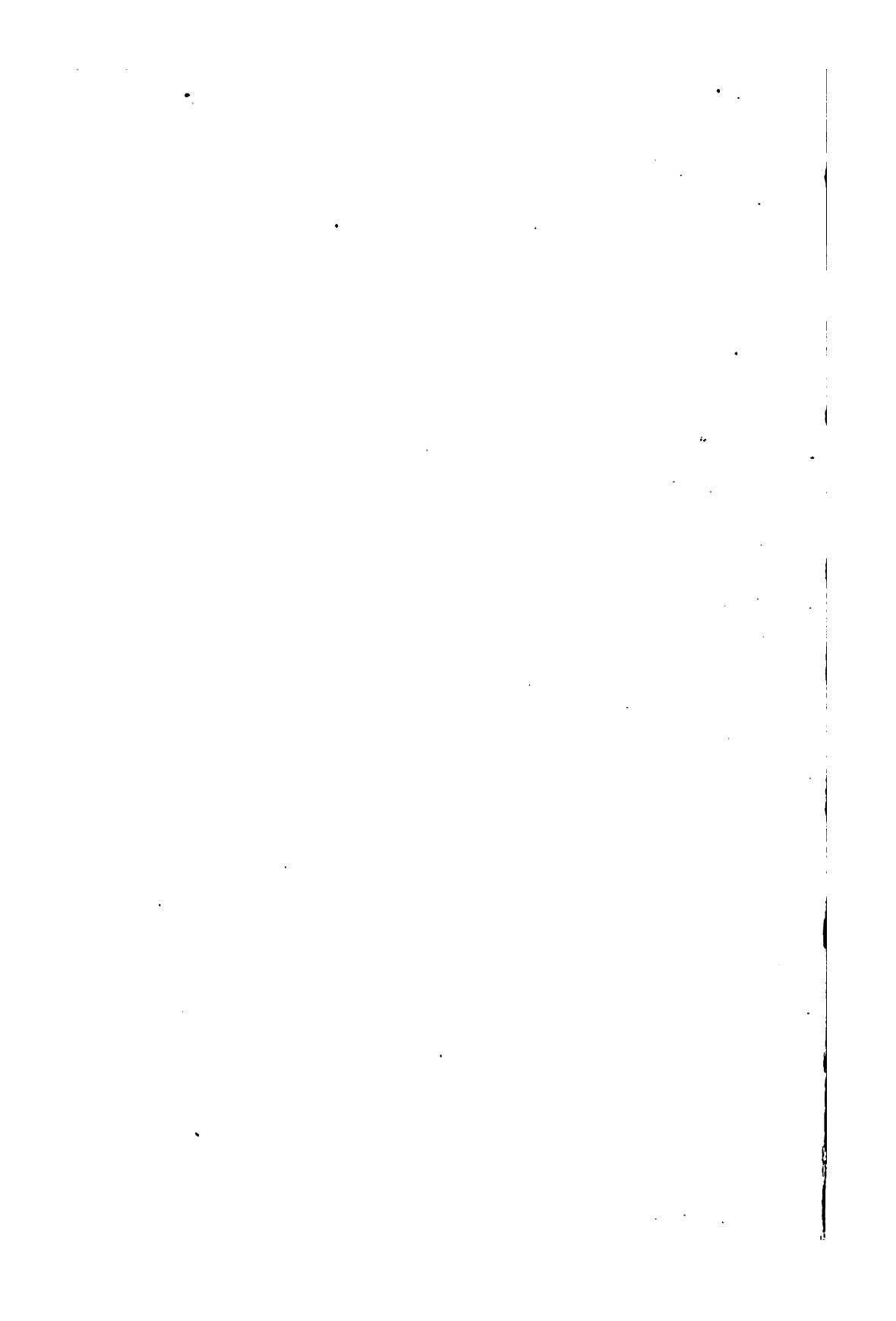
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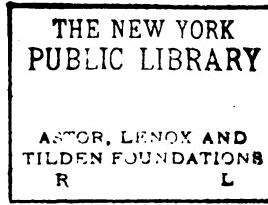
With the compliments of the  
Author

SONNETS, SONGS, LAMENTS.

N.Y.

Stone







Most Sincerely Yours

C. E. Weston-Dane.

*Sonnets*  
*Songs*  
*Laments*

BY

Cara G. Whiton-Stone

Lc

WITH PORTRAIT

JOSEPH GEORGE CUPPLES  
Publisher and General Bookseller  
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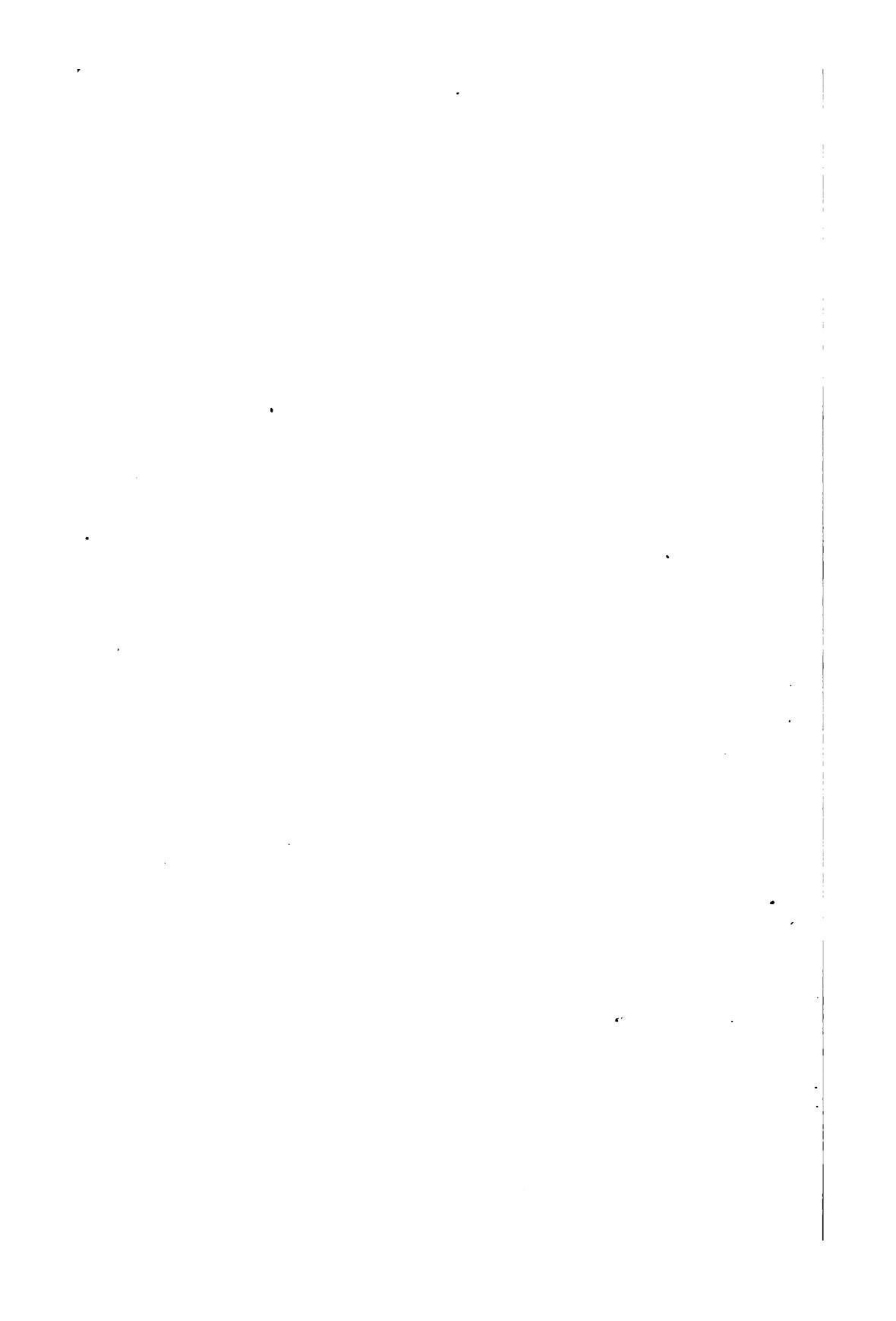
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## DEDICATION.

Unto the living who have known  
How restless were the wings of Song,  
Whose noble lives have shaped my own,  
These flights belong.

But holy silences and calms  
Beyond Song's uttermost I give  
To those who sleep with folded palms :  
My dead — who live.



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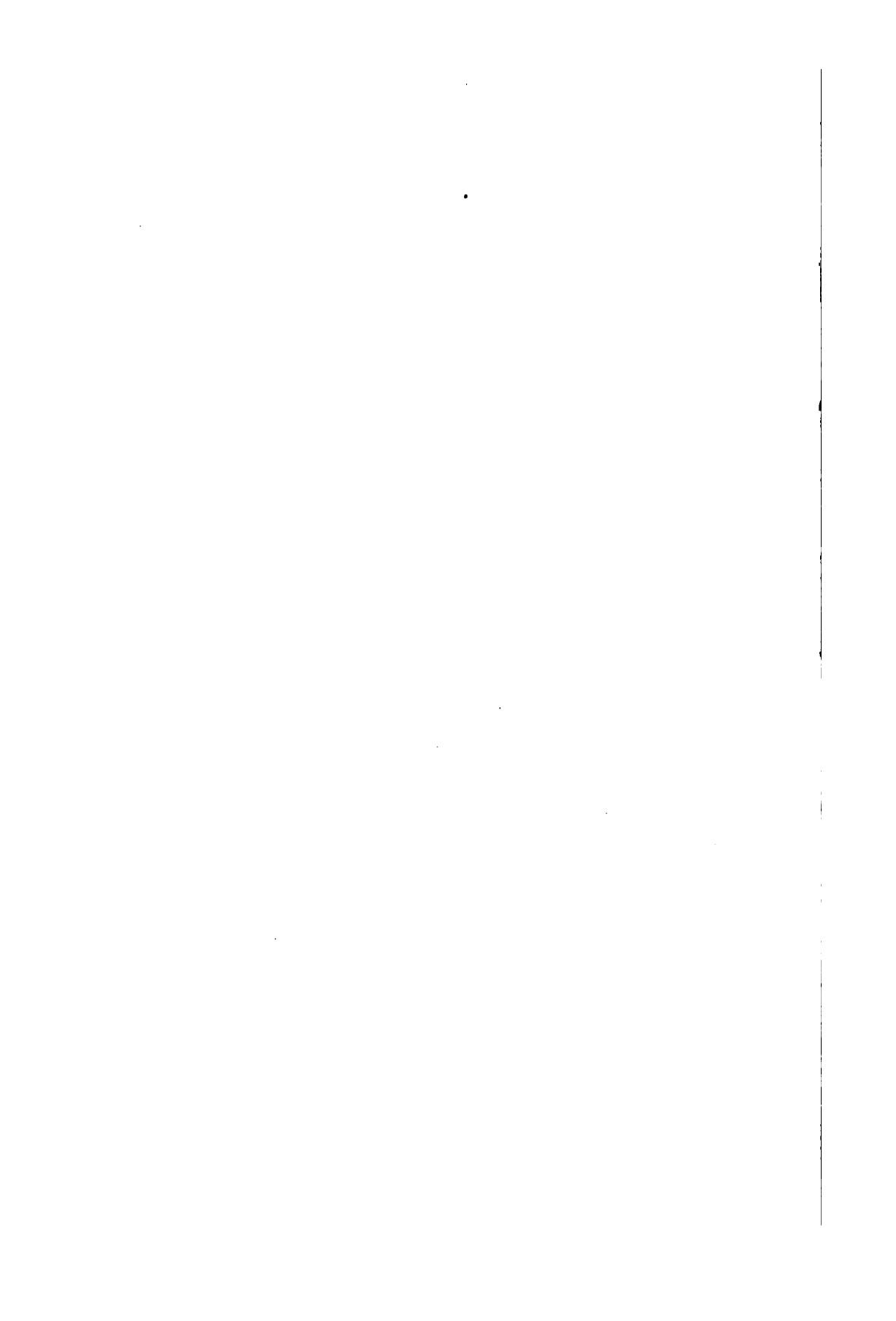
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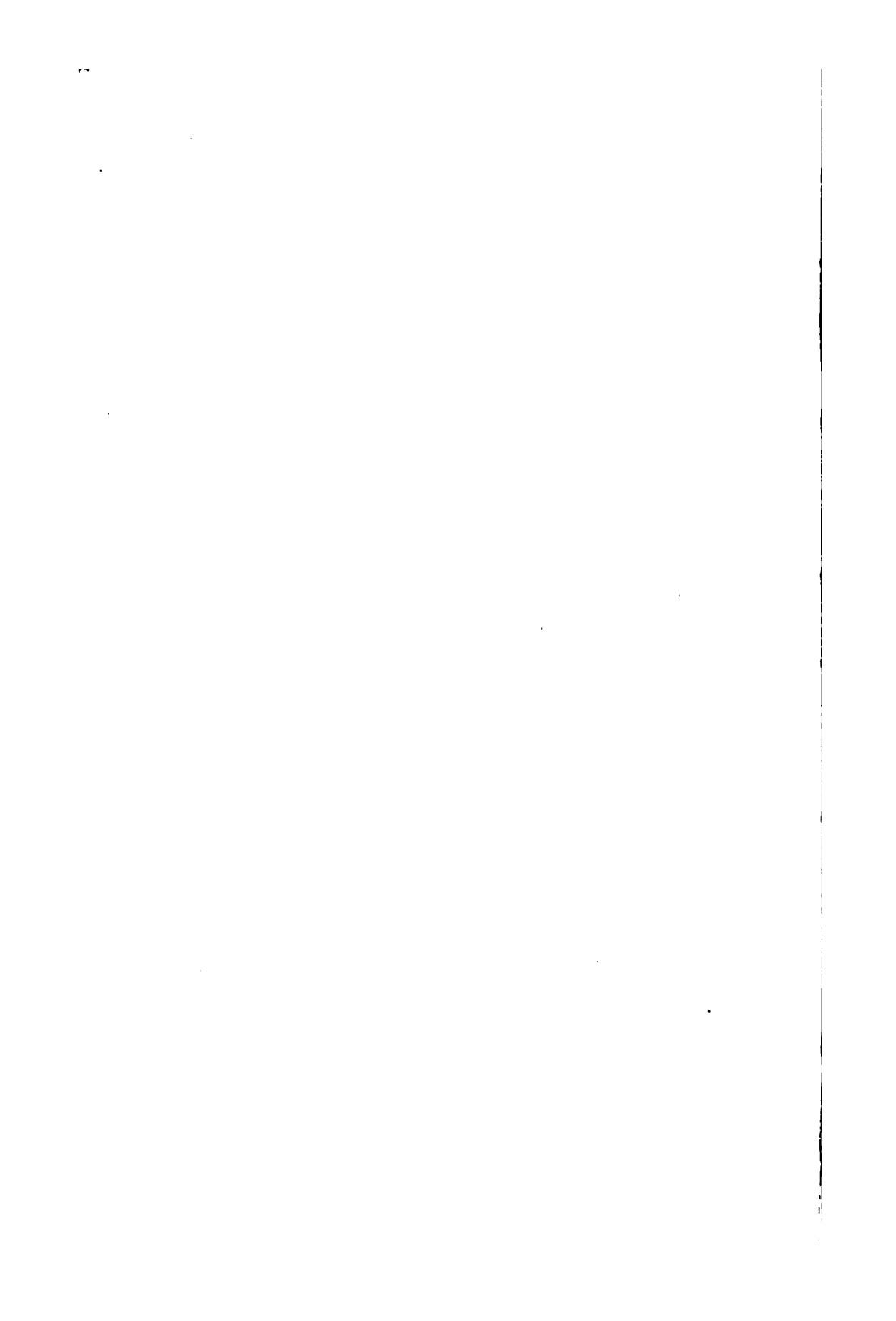
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*SONNETS.*



When first in childhood on the silver shore  
I saw the seashells in the sunlight shine,  
And built them into palaces divine,  
I used to dream I heard strange music pour  
Through their pink arching halls, as if they bore  
A message from the sea's great heart to mine.

The verses I have writ herein are sign  
I hear the eternal rhythm as of yore.—  
'Chance, ye who read may find some note to show  
My singing faintly justified ; for every tide  
That Life has swept, though fathoms deep with  
    woe,  
Though passionate with tears, I have defied,—  
Hearing, above their waves' resistless flow,  
Insurgent song that would not be denied.



## JANUARY.

The world lies fair, beneath the unshadowed skies,  
Clad in an ermined robe the heavens prepare :  
And trees their crystal weighted splendors bear,  
By the gold sunshine won to opal guise ;  
The river's frozen breast transparent lies ;  
And crisp and keen, of mountain tops aware,  
Down from the northern peaks the northern air  
Whirls o'er the sparkling snow that, drifting, flies.  
The sunsets roll away in brilliant tides ;  
The twilights linger in a pale green light ;  
Along the emerald path the new moon glides  
And searches crescent-souled some fairer height ;  
And all the Winter's icy triumph hides  
In January's bosom cold and white.

## FEBRUARY.

Forests keep frost bound, and the Winter wears  
Its sternest front these February days ;  
The snow upon the ground still frozen stays,  
Although the sun, like a great king, prepares  
To go forth mighty-conquering, and dares  
To hurl his javelins that flash and blaze  
From out the fortress of the heavens, whose ways  
He daily higher traverses, and bares  
His soul's desire, — the icy bonds to break.  
Nor can the torrents long be held from swing  
Of their o'erwhelming flow, and hills will shake  
From off their rainbowed crests the wreaths that  
cling,  
And from its long deep sleep the earth will wake  
And feel its fluttering heart astir with Spring.

J Q V M

## MARCH.

The troubled eyes of March flash out reply  
To my mute questioning prophecies of Spring ;  
For lo ! upon her yearning bosom cling  
The red-gold crocuses, and snow-drops lie  
Half-hidden 'neath her ermined mantle—shy  
In the white joy of new awakening,  
As star-soul'd trophies that the sunbeams bring,  
To show the earth warm veined. Upon the sky,  
In its gray pallor, dazzling breaks of blue  
Enchant the eye, and the uncovered sun,  
(The gusty fitful storm-clouds climbing through,)  
Shines out, triumphant that the Spring is won.  
And hark ! across the heavens, lit up anew,  
Birds' songs, like golden lightning, rippling run.

**APRIL.**

I know the Spring is here for bluebirds trill  
In lofty solitudes where hide the snows ;  
And earth, like a great radiant crystal, glows  
In the deep sunshine beautiful and still.  
And soon the color of the heavens will thrill  
The flowers to waken, and in tidal flows  
Of their own azure, violets will unclose,  
And warm blood veins of the arbutus fill.  
The dawns will plunge themselves to seas of red,  
And low-hung moons lend daffodils their gold,  
And suns unsheathe their radiant spears o'erhead ;  
And I shall watch the budding life unfold,  
With a great aching longing for the dead,  
Whose hands the flowers of Spring forever hold.

---

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**MAY.**

The violets have come. The south winds blow,  
Impatient hurrying, as in Summer's quest,  
Straight from the gulf stream, and the earth's  
warm breast,  
Whereon the sunshine lies and grasses grow,  
Is now with the arbutus bloom aglow ;  
The bees, new-waked to life, unwearying test  
Their olden haunts, and hum with soft unrest  
In white campanulas, that to and fro  
Chime mystic tunes of shadow and of shine.  
And lo ! great gusts of joy my soul o'ersweep,  
And I am filled with passion so divine,  
So strangely sweet, it seems as I could keep  
Pace with the song of birds, and feel as mine  
The unfettered pulses of the Spring that beat.

**JUNE.**

Dizzy with song, gay birds fan through the air  
And showers of liquid music downward send ;  
And daisies to the fresh young grasses lend  
A silver radiance, as of June aware :  
The hearts of wayside roses are laid bare,  
And buttercups, that to the breezes bend,  
In yellow billows with the sunshine blend,  
And in its glow the leaves are glistening fair ;  
On noiseless wings pale amber butterflies  
Float by, and wild bees murmur to the noon  
— Lingering beneath their purple canopies —  
The clover's secrets in a lazy tune ;  
And in the sapphire heavens incarnate lies  
The matchless splendor of the matchless June.

## JULY.

Behind the brazen dawn, the July sun  
Lies like a circling fire, and burning through,  
Melts the whole outspread heavens to blazing blue,  
And shines till late-mown valleys are o'errun  
With fiercest languors. Sharp-winged insects shun  
The lurid atmosphere, and, lost to view,  
Draw forth their tiny instruments anew,  
And pipe the sultry noontides shrilly on.  
The butterflies slow loitering drift away  
From the wild-roses' wooing hearts, and hide  
With bees that, hushed by heat, their humming  
stay,  
In chalices whose dews were later dried ;  
And flaming forth in tropical array,  
Nasturtiums drink Midsummer undenied.

**AUGUST.**

The mists of morning hide the skies' deep blue,  
Though wind-tossed sunflowers, gold with noon-  
tides, bear  
Their shadow-hearted splendor through the air ;  
And asters, glad with purple, spring anew ;  
But the whole August glory cannot woo  
The birds to song, and twilights pale and fair  
Are darkened with the swallows sailing where  
Another summer waits. The heavy dew  
Falls earlier, and whippoorwills complain  
In forest deeps. Great vivid moons arise,  
Burning and fierce as passionate with pain ;  
And, deep within, a sense of sadness lies ;  
For, whatso'er of beauty may remain,  
The soul of Summer with the swallow flies.

## SEPTEMBER.

The skies look sadder : Summer has gone by, —  
But the late wan-faced dandelions reign ;  
And gold gerardias have come back again,  
And azure gentians and the primrose high.  
The air still throbs with heat, and noisy fly  
The gay cicadas through the rustling grain,  
Grating the air, in a long-drawn refrain,  
With tireless monotones of ecstasy :—  
The cardinals flame. Red clustering berries line  
The leaf-illumined ways, and deeper grows  
The wild grape's color, in whose prisoned wine  
The blood of June, still burning, tides flows.  
Summer dies not, for all that is divine  
Lives in some goldener force, some fairer rose.

## OCTOBER.

The wooded waysides with a royal grace  
The color of the eupatoriums bear ;  
The wild grapes, lending perfume to the air,  
Riot in dazzle of the sun's full face ;  
The hills stand calm, each in its purple place ;  
And bees, late-searching 'mid the flowers, outbear  
Their souls in noisy triumphing, aware  
What affluence still hides in gold-lit space ;  
The heavens in a blue ecstasy appear ;  
And sumach fires are lit, as beacons set  
Amid the solitudes for Autumn's cheer ;  
The sunsets, streaming into rainbows, let  
Their colors linger till the stars draw near ;  
And the sweet days — in trance of violet —  
Burn passionate with glory of the year.

## NOVEMBER.

The golden days are past. The chill bleak skies  
Brood sullen o'er the earth, and hints of dew  
Lurk in the long lank grass the whole day through ;  
The wailing winds in cold fierce gusts arise,  
Sweeping the leafless branches into sighs.  
Yet sometimes in the transient rifts of blue  
A shadowy splendor shimmers forth anew,  
Like the lost Summer in a ghostly guise :—  
On graves of gentians, in their sleep unstirred,  
The dead leaves, rustling forth their requiems,  
    throng ;  
And 'chance, by the fleet sunshine won, some bird  
— In solitary flight delayed too long —  
Above the pines is desolately heard  
Startling the noontides with a pallid song.

## DECEMBER.

Straight through the solemn waiting east dawns  
sweep  
O'erflooding tides of rose, and great suns loom,  
Like splendid flowers rushed suddenly to bloom,  
And up the horizon, gorgeous-hearted, leap.  
The skies, magnificent with azure, steep  
The snows with their own color, nor find room,  
As in the Autumn's later days, for gloom :—  
For Winter holds a rapture high and deep,  
Bearing the joy of centuries as its own,  
Knowing its sacred claim to crowning place  
In the year's triumph, since its sun first shone  
Upon the Immortal Child's immortal face :  
Nor can the glory ever be outgrown,—  
Therefore December's wonder and its grace.

**WORK.**

I count more royal than a king's, the hand  
Whose hardened palm, with scarring lines, gives  
sign  
Of labor bravely done ; it is the brand  
Of future angelhood ; and God's divine  
Delay in giving is but as a chance  
Most opportune, for truth's unfledged desires  
To grow to fairest wings. The soul's advance  
Is surely swifter even as it aspires.  
And who would shun life's toil, and idly dream,  
When out of chaos countless worlds, arrayed  
In marvellous beauty, came as work supreme  
From the Creative hands ? What He has made  
Mainspring of his illimitable plan  
Should be, and is, divinest gift to man.

## I.

There was an enchanted time, dear heart, I knew  
The infinite of Joy, for I had found  
Love's uttermost peak, that stood all sunlight-  
crowned  
In Love's domain. Yet while so near the blue  
That Heaven seemed half-revealed, sudden flashed  
through  
Lightning, that on the sky's great bosom wound  
Its chain of awful splendor round and round,  
And the deep thunder brake and darkness grew ;  
And now the cold rains fall and wild seas beat,  
Perplexed to madness on the haggard shore ;  
And for Joy's infinite these hot tears pour.  
Yet, how know I that it would not defeat  
Love's high decree if otherwise ? Nay, sweet !  
Love were not love if I should weep no more.

## II.

Somewhere, when I have traversed sphere on  
sphere,  
And seen each planet-sky through thinner air  
A more celestial depth of color wear,  
As lit by larger suns they must appear,  
I shall look up, nor need mine eyes to screen,  
And watch, undazzled by the light afar,  
Your face above me shining like a star,  
And see that only music lies between.  
Then I shall be content, for I shall know  
No barriers in higher worlds can make  
Our outward ways diverge ; but I shall wake  
To see the love there I have missed below ; —  
And since through music reached, for music's  
sake,  
Whose first and last is Heaven, you will not let  
me go.

I cannot go to meet the fresh young Spring  
With the same throbbing pulses as of yore,  
For then I knew no grieving, and could sing,  
Undreaming of lament. The lilies wore  
No shadows on their whiteness, and I drew  
Divinest harmonies from silence ; yet,  
Through notes that were most exquisite, I grew  
To consciousness of sorrow ; now I wet  
The grasses with my tears, feeling a sting  
In the calm days (not like youth's blissful pain),  
But a strong turbulence that seems to bring  
Life's sweetness and despairs all back again.  
I turn away — yet still I can but see  
The Spring, soft-gliding, bringing flowers to me.

## DESIRE.

If I could breathe, unshadowed by lament,  
A tender song whose purest notes should blend  
With the impassioned music of a friend,  
I should be filled with infinite content.  
Weeping, I still have known how affluent  
Was life ; and that love-laden hearts could bend  
Almost to breaking, and Love's weight defend :  
And yet to-day divinest joy has lent  
A mist of exaltation, as to hide  
The hills from which I cannot turn away :  
Sorrow forever looms that once holds sway ;  
But if, ere this sweet healing I had died,  
(Looking on naked heights of suffering)  
How could I half have guessed what Death  
would bring ?

## JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE.

(June 8, 1888.)

Not like the cold-browed Night came Death to  
him  
Who smiled on Death; but Morning, golden-  
tressed,  
Wearing a crystal star upon its breast —  
With lights that flashed like eyes of cherubim —  
Came through the tender twilight, soft and dim,  
And like an Angel, sent in angel-quest,  
Swept, sun-winged, through some planet way un-  
guessed,  
And bore him out beyond the horizon's rim.  
What then? We cannot follow where he went,  
Nor howsoe'er we strain our longing eyes  
See even one ray of his new splendor lent, —  
For immortals come not back from Paradise.  
But him, who all his soul's strong forces spent  
Building his Heaven, God's Heaven will not sur-  
prise.

TO JOHN G. WHITTIER, POET,  
ON HIS BIRTHDAY.

Poet, calm standing 'neath the western skies,  
Magnificent upon the crest of song,  
In the full sunlight shining clear and strong,  
The whole expanse of heaven that o'er thee lies  
Is quick with light of unsung melodies  
That to uncounted birthdays may belong : —  
Reverent, I bring my tribute with the throng  
That press to wish thee holy joy ; mine eyes  
Full fixed on Life's great problems, made divine  
In thy sun-written verse : — nor need to say,  
“ Poet, sing on,” — music's immortal wine  
Runs in thy veins, with golden rush and sway  
That so impels. Eternal youth is thine —  
And thou wilt sing ; — sing Time itself away.

## TO A POET IN GRIEF.

What time you smiled before the shadow came,  
Feeling the summer in your pulses leap,  
I saw your soul's ecstatic pinions sweep,  
With mystic knowledge of the sun aflame,  
Up towards its vivid heart as if to claim  
Joy's fullest measure ; — now that you must weep.  
I know this solemn passion, strange and deep,  
Will bear you nearer to your golden aim.  
For uttermost of Joy is less than Pain,  
And, who wears crown thereof, is lifted so,  
To kinship with the Highest, and may gain  
The circling splendor 'bove the brow of woe.  
Poet, weep on, for Song cannot attain  
The perfect cadence but with tears that flow.

**GOLDEN ROD AND ASTERS.**

Ere yet the summer has gone by, behold  
The golden rod is here, whose armies wear —  
Slow waving in the languid August air —  
Resplendent plumes, drooped tremulous with gold.  
Now, too, the asters waken, gay and bold,  
And starting from their starry dreams, prepare  
The sunlit glory of the days to share,  
And flauntingly their dazzling hearts unfold.  
Oh, autumn flowers ! — Rocked on the silver stream  
The odorous, pink-flushed lilies linger yet,  
And still, wild-roses in the distance gleam ; —  
Why, less enchanting, are ye near them set ?  
Ye come too soon : I feel reproach supreme,  
So short the summer, and so long regret.

**A JUNE DAY.**

Oh, peerless, perfect day ! With violet sky  
So tender-sad, and wind, soft floating, swept  
From fresh-blown roses they through night have  
    kept

Within their hearts imprisoned, — I do sigh  
In the sweet pain of too full ecstasy  
At so much beauty. Golden shadows play  
Through leaves all tremulous, and the hills lie  
Enwrapped in their own mist against the sky,  
As heavenly joys that men from men do veil,  
Lest sacredness be lost. Oh, day most fair !  
Intense with tumult that doth silence wear,  
You will be left when earthly glories pale,  
In your eternal sweetness set apart,  
One fresh, white rose, on the dead Summer's heart.

## AT NIGHT.

In the pained sweetness of divine delight  
I sit, nor heed the wasted moon's delay ;  
Feeling as I could weep my heart away  
Upon the tender, throbbing breast of night.  
It is not often that I feel the might  
Of aught that moves, save passionate despair :—  
The tears from overflow of bliss are rare ;  
Yet sometimes Love doth lift me to a height  
From which, as in a dream of Heaven, I see  
The gulf stream of my sorrows side by side  
With a great rapture that has reached flood tide.  
And then I know that it was meant for me  
To kiss warm lips as one by angels led,  
And love the living dearer for my dead.

**EASTER.**

Up to the radiant dawn I lift mine eyes  
Where—conscious of the spring — a burning  
glow  
Runs through the east and in the horizon low  
Gathers intense : The sun full-rounded lies  
On heart of heaven, and, quick with mysteries  
Of that first Easter, shines as long ago  
On Christ's ascent — with the same flooding flow  
As when His nearing glory cleft the skies.  
Oh, Vision wonderful ! The lilies wake  
In the new splendor of their white array,  
And blossoms to the same fair beauty break  
As when Thou wentest Thine illumined way.  
There is no death since death Thou didst partake.  
Thou liv'st ! Thou reign'st ! It is Thine Easter  
Day.

## IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

Deep musing through the Abbey's aisles I strayed,  
Awed by the wide magnificence, to where  
'Neath marble canopies, in carvings fair,  
The poets, with their songless hearts, were laid.  
Shakespeare, and Gray, and Milton were arrayed  
Before me — and on Milton's sculptured hair  
Adown the arches through the solemn air  
A strange glow fell, as if the sun essayed  
From light of centuries a crown to bring.  
Then, like bent rainbows swept to violet  
I saw, above his brow's completeness met,  
An aureole e'en Handel's self might sing ;  
While, towering near, the statued Muse's king  
Saw God's own sevenths on Milton's forehead set.

## THE FRINGED GENTIAN.

Moon-hearted lilies, that in summer beat  
Upon the river's heaving breast, are dead.  
But scarlet fires, by fierce suns earlier sped,  
Through the nasturtium's veins run hot and fleet ;  
And where the mountain's purple shadows meet —  
Incarnate of the cloudless heavens o'erhead —  
The gentians, overbrimmed with azure, spread  
Their star-edged chalices to noontide's heat ;  
For suns no more look down with torrid eyes ;  
The passion of the year has burned away :  
But exquisite within this wild flower lies  
The whole year's affluence ! — Oh, late born, say,  
Do you not wear, in empyrean dyes,  
The soul of Spring, despite your bloom's delay ?

**AT CHRISTMASTIDE.**

If Christ should come to me in a child's guise,  
As to the world so long ago he came,  
All unafraid I should look up and claim  
The heavenly pity of his rapt young eyes.  
But should a vision of the Master rise —  
His brows encircled wide with rays of flame —  
Although his lips spake nor reproach nor blame,  
I should fall down with agonizing sighs,  
Nor to lift up my face again should dare.  
Oh, soul too scant of faith ! Do I not know  
Who walked the earth with human woes to bear  
Knows human hearts ? And, 'chance, if I should  
    go  
And touch His garment's hem His eyes would  
    wear  
The Christ-Child's look — the same compassion  
    show.

**FAREWELL.**

Farewell! It is to summer that I speak,  
And not to you that made my summer dear ;  
You cannot go from me, although the tear  
I may not kiss away upon your cheek :  
An old, dull ache comes back ; yet would I seek  
No selfish solace that your heart might fear :  
Only in passion of the waning year  
After the grapes are purpled, days are bleak :  
I am so used to parting that I weep  
When I am happy e'en ; because the line  
Dividing joy from sorrow is so fine  
That I can hardly tell which way to keep ;  
Yet Death will find more clear my soul's red wine  
Because your love has poured itself to mine.

Love ! you who know a soul's volcanic blaze,  
Its exaltation and profound despair,—  
Its restless currents whirling here and there,—  
Its summers, changing to November days,—  
I turn to you — as golden flower obeys  
The sun's behest, — now living in the air  
Of constant June ; whose wings sweep fair,  
Untouched by storm, the empyrean ways.  
Nor other mood is yours, than calm alone ;  
To the white heights of Peace your soul has  
pressed :  
Great seas upheaved, great tidal waves upthrown,  
Have rocked themselves to silence in your breast ;  
And from its deeps of pain your heart has grown  
So infinitely strong, that it can rest.

## TWO MOODS.

## YESTERDAY.

From the first blush of sunrise, till the day  
Sprang, purple-winged, to the full moon's embrace,  
I stayed not singing : I was glad for grace  
Of the impassioned sunshine, for the sway  
Of silver shadows that slow drew away  
And in the midnight glory dropt to place.  
It seemed as if my joy could fill all space,  
And in its boundlessness all earth outweigh.  
It was not spring — and yet I seemed to move  
Amid the flowers, and, rapt and strange, to hear  
The birds' high transport, as my own to prove.  
I sang and sang, for shadowless and clear,  
I saw, like a near heaven, the eyes of Love.

TO-DAY.

I sing no more with rapture ; for a pall,  
Ashen as mists of late November days,  
Ghostly as a wet moon's encircling haze,  
Holds me resistless in its sullen thrall.  
With listless droop my soul's numb pinions fall,  
Nor can I, soaring, traverse music's ways ;  
The fires of song will not be lured to blaze :—  
Mute as the heavens, I know despair of Saul :—  
What touch can rouse me from this frozen dream ?  
Too sad for tears, e'en tears I am denied.  
I feel a desolation as supreme  
And chill as death. I hear the ebbing tide  
Sweep moaning back, and Night's black arrows  
seem  
Plunged to my heart, in blacker night to hide.

## I.

Across the sun, in threatening darkness, went  
A great cloud, thunder-rim'd ; and silent, to  
Their sheltering nests, the birds affrighted flew,  
And the June leaves were into shivering sent ;  
The soft young grasses in the meadows bent,  
And the hushed, heat-charged air, more sultry  
grew,  
When, suddenly a bolt of flame shot through  
The insurgent sky, wherein a fire seemed pent ;  
And down its darkened bosom crashed a sound,  
As massed artillery had broken away ;  
Then, rush of mighty waters smote the ground :  
For clouds' black souls, that held the heavens in  
sway,  
With passion of the lightning all unbound,  
Broke forth tumultuous, nor their floods could  
stay.

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## II.

Poor rose, that but two yesterdays ago  
Bloomed by the way so young, and fresh, and fair,  
Something of your old fragrance still you bear,  
With kisses of the wild rain, lying low.  
The grasses have been lifted up, and blow,  
Thick starred with daises, in the storm-cleared air,  
And the June leaves forget their half despair,  
And rock the yellow sunshine to and fro ;  
The skies are even fairer than before ;  
Yet with the rain your crushed leaves still are wet.  
With life so sweet, can death mean, all is o'er ?  
Nay, 'chance some bird, your blush remembering  
yet,  
Will daily come, and to the sunrise pour  
A song so glad, men will unlearn regret.

## TO THE DIVINE DEAD.

Sweet ! years ago, when, 'gainst the sky's deep  
blue,  
The far-off hills lay phantomed through the haze,  
I stooped, the while you played in grassy ways,  
And one great golden lily plucked for you.  
It seemed as if the very song-birds knew  
June's wild-rose heart had throbbed itself to maze  
Of riotous bloom, but lovelier to my gaze  
Than all the sun-enraptured flowers that grew  
Was your glad face. I took your happy hand,  
And, smiling, bade you stay as glad fore'er,  
Nor knew what magnitudes my words had  
spanned ;  
For all Junes since I see you everywhere  
With that same sweet, rapt smile I understand  
Must crown you, 'mong immortals, still most fair.

## A PORTRAIT.

He has the look of one of whom I dare  
Not speak ; with deep, far-searching eyes,  
That seem unwonderingly to recognize  
Eternal truths ; as if his soul had share  
In seraphs' limitless desire, and bare,  
Unshadowed glory of infinities  
Had set its seal on him and made him wise  
Beyond his years ; with long, soft, waving hair,  
(Like floating rays of summer sunshine) swept  
In pure abandonment around his face,  
Divine in the expression ; with the grace  
Of beauty heavenly born, that will be kept,  
Like that of Christ in Mary's dream of bliss ;  
The child from angel known but by its kiss.

## HER PORTRAIT.

What hand can paint the passionate unrest  
Of the great throbbing sea, or ecstasy  
Of a new dawn ? No song poured from the breast  
Of a pained nightingale can ever be  
Portrayed to those who have not heard ; then why  
(In poet's impotence) should I aspire  
To lift pale lids that brimming tears deny,  
Or take from statue mad with life's desire  
The veil of silence ? I could never show  
A great soul's lightning flashes of delight ;  
Or thoughts wild beating that do lie too low  
For fathoming : so I leave her as a white,  
Pure, sweet, intangible and high Ideal  
That Love will some time make divinely Real.

HER FRIEND'S PORTRAIT.

She stands upon th' uplifted heights, o'erhung  
With mists that hide her from the world below;  
And near the sun, but with her feet on snow,  
She leaves her sweetest fantasies unsung,  
Lest, in her outpoured passion, she betray  
The music running riot in her soul ;  
Yet in the light of recognition, whole  
Pure tender harmonies are breathed away.  
Through Love's mute pain she comprehends de-  
light —  
Though measurement of bliss is hard to know :  
Yet when the noonday sun shall melt the snow,  
And mists dissolve that hide her from our sight,  
Some subtle instinct tells, we shall behold  
A fair white lily with a heart of gold.

**TO THE MORNING STAR.****CHRISTMAS, 1888.**

Oh, Star of morning, throbbing in the blue  
Like some gold message from the other side,  
That ages since the manger glorified  
And the white rapture of the Virgin knew,  
I watched you shine till dusk was reddened through  
With blood of sunrise, while majestic-eyed  
You lent your splendor to the luminous tide  
That once great joy foretold. — Looking unto  
Your silent ecstasy, behold, I wondered not  
You brake to singing in that wondrous time,  
Nor that exultant symphonies were caught  
Back into Heaven from out the deeps of Time.  
I veil my lifted eyes, struck dumb with thought,  
Your light once shone upon the Face sublime.

## IN MAY.

I watched the violet darkness, noiseless sent  
To a vast crystal ; for like silver flame  
Breaking the blue heavens through, the glad moon  
came  
And o'er the slumbering hills majestic bent.  
My blood ran swift : I could not sleep, for scent  
Of myriad flowers. The moonlight seemed to aim  
To reach the half-oped lilies, as to claim  
The whole fine rapture in their white souls pent :  
Filled with a sense of beauty all divine,  
Strange fancies floated through my brain : — I lay  
Quaffing the spring, like some celestial wine,  
Dreaming a bird that sang its heart away  
Had throbbed its fire of ecstasy to mine,  
— And knew myself intoxicate with May.

## AN AUGUST NIGHT.

The Northern lights streamed up the dusky blue,  
Above the hills, faint outlined peak on peak,  
Watched by the kindred stars, that seemed to seek  
A new communion, as the gold fire grew.  
The August air, cooled by the falling dew,  
Swept o'er the drowsy wild flowers, fair and meek,  
And loitered, hushing them — as if in freak  
Of perfume-laden joy — to rest anew.  
And still, while to the sky my face was turned,  
Throned by the glory, yet distinct in light,  
The stars, like deeps of violet, swayed and burned,  
And it was God himself that filled the night ;  
The hills, the stars, the heavens to which I yearned  
Were but the revelations of His might.

**EGYPT.**

Hushed by the deep-voiced hum of centuries,  
Cities have lain unstirred on Egypt's breast,  
Till now, its ruined temples torn from rest  
In fragmentary splendors meet our eyes :  
And sculptured brows, whereon the sunlight lies  
— Colossal borne — hewn from Earth's deeps,  
            attest  
The dead's divine Ideals, in whose quest  
They searched their own soul's immortalities.  
Oh, Egypt ! in your bosom's crypt, you hold  
Not lifeless ashes of the Past alone,  
But Art, that palpitates with fires untold,  
Mysterious dreams, inscrutable in stone,  
And dusk-hued vases, on whose sides are scroll'd  
Dim, faded characters, dead Kings might own.

## CHRISTMAS MORNING.

## THE ETERNAL CHILD.

The whole great joy, that filled the world of old  
When into far-off Bethlehem Christ was born,—  
Yea ! even mightier for the centuries gone,—  
Lives in our hearts to-day. The stars still hold  
Their watches, glad as when their singing roll'd  
Adown the burning bosom of the morn,  
Fired with the knowledge that, no more forlorn,  
The human to the immortal might unfold.  
Oh, Love incarnate ! 'bove thy manger low  
The heavens, replete with their auroral sign,  
Were scintillant with Love,— with Love that lo !  
Through the eternal years shall streaming shine :  
— Great waves of ecstacy our souls o'erflow  
Redeemer, Saviour, King, yet Child divine.

**CLYTIE.**

' Neath the late summer's most enchanting skies  
There grew a sunflower ; tossed in crystal air  
Of early dawns, and with its great heart bare  
To noonday carnivals of butterflies :  
From the sun's bended heart had come the dyes  
That made its amber rim so dazzling fair.  
And as I watched it in the silence there  
I wondered if I might not see arise, —  
As if its flower-soul had its flower outgrown, —  
And slow untangle from its golden maze  
The youthful nymph from the Apollo flown.  
Nay ! While I waited, in its petals' blaze,  
Through haze of centuries, like a vision, shone  
The fair sweet Clytie of Olympian days.

**JULIANA HORATIA EWING.**

Angel ! o'er whom the angels tender brood,  
And down celestial shining stretches lead,  
I wonder if you felt the immortal need  
— In passion of some great creative mood —  
To sun yourself, and be all understood  
In God's high presence ? — If your soul was freed,  
The while interpreting Love's luminous creed,  
By Love itself, through gates of sapphire wooed ?  
Ah ! I, who knew you not, am fain to weep  
The hushing of your noble heart — and yet  
Your life's sweet story ere you fell asleep  
Divinest ending in yon Heaven has met ;  
And to Archangel's thoughts you now can sweep,  
And wear them, starry, for your coronet.

AT GRASMERE.

I stood where Wordsworth slept. The time had  
past  
For nightingales to sing, or I should fain  
Have listened till in some enchanting strain  
They seemed to pour their longings vague and  
vast;  
And plaintive rising, while my heart beat fast,  
I might have heard above their silvery pain  
The echo of his soul's divine refrain  
Who sang himself beyond the stars at last.  
The hills his Poet eyes were wont to view  
Still kept majestic guard o'er him, and sent  
In lines of color, where the heather grew,  
Their purple messages ; — nor knew, content,  
Uplifted 'bove their calm, that smiling, through  
The gates of amethyst he long since went.

## VENUS DE MILO.

Yes, Venus ! — There she stands, the world's  
delight ;  
Nor will she smile, however I implore.  
Her features shaped with noble thoughts she bore  
Ere passion of her beauty dropt to white  
Of cold perfection from its splendid height ;  
And I in pathos of her look would pour  
Straight to her veins the tides that rush and roar  
Through my own heart, as her imperial right.  
But Art its own divine behests fulfils,  
And mute and cold, but never dead, she seems.  
Nay, oftentimes — when, as hung mid daffodils,  
The low sun crowns her with its dying gleams —  
Her marble presence all the thin air thrills,  
And "Hush!" I whisper, "Hush! she breathes,  
she dreams."

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**ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.**

“And here our Duke lies,” so one stately said,  
“In this vast crypt, this lofty-vaulted tomb.”  
And the dim-lit Cathedral seemed to loom,  
And waves of silence, circling, to outspread,  
As tender brooding o'er the immortal dead.  
I turned, impressed by massive sweeps of room,  
Filled with o'erarching magnitudes of gloom,  
And spake: “He lies on most majestic bed.”—  
Then History's footsteps backward I retraced:—  
I saw a warrior that to victory went;  
I saw Old England with her proud heart rent,  
And stone by stone of this cathedral placed,  
Until in its vast bosom it embraced  
Whom England mourned—and gave this monu-  
ment.

**THE POET SCULPTOR.**

" My soul's sweet fever that runs high to rhyme  
I will assuage " — the poet sculptor said,  
" Giving hot life to what would else be dead,  
Dreaming in calm of marble, for a time.  
Strange measures haunt me, like the march sublime  
Of the Immortals as they onward tread,  
By God's own rushing music trumpeted ;  
Strange glories pulse as from a heavenly chime.  
Bring me the chisel : in this mood of mine  
I feel a power within me, angel strong,  
To image forth a shape so pure, so fine,  
Another Poet gazing rapt and long  
Will in a fire of ecstasy divine  
The marble triumph of a sculptured song."

## A VISION.

I dreamed in heaven's blue silences there grew  
A vision to mine eyes, like music caught  
To wings, and in its mystic eyes I sought  
To read some message in a language new,  
Some prophecy that in its passage through  
The spheres' immensities it might have brought :  
Lifted in dreaming on a wave of thought  
That swept to tidal height, awhile I knew  
The immortal ether — for a little space  
Into a soul's unshadowed knowledge went.  
I whispered : "Here can be for death no place,"  
And saw God's smile flash o'er the firmament,  
And heard a voice, down sweeps of lilies sent,  
Say, "See the archangel in each vanished face."

## TO MARY.

You stooped to place a rose upon my breast ;  
Your cheek was near ; the rose was in eclipse ;  
If you had seen my eyes you would have guessed  
Why silence came when I had touched your lips.  
Nor would you wonder that I turned away,  
The deep, sharp pain from memory's sword to  
    hide,  
Knowing, however fair the summer day,  
That day and night are ever side by side :  
It was not youth (that has been left behind)  
For which I wept, but when your lips I pressed  
A shadowy feeling only half defined  
Swept waves of pity surging o'er my breast —  
Sweet smiling lips that never yet have said  
(Pale with despair) one farewell to the dead.

Mine eyes are scanning, as with search begun,  
The clouds, the sun, the sky's pathetic blue,  
The moon, the stars, the far-off planets through,  
Looking, with grief ineffable, for one  
I cannot find. Nor would I even shun  
Night's barest, bleakest spaces, could I know  
His face was veiled therein ; but I should go  
— As in the midnight hid a golden sun —  
Straight to his heart. Oh, love, I cry in vain !  
Nor pain, however great, the spheres can sway.  
Silent they sweep on their majestic way :  
The sun shines out as with a proud disdain :  
The heavens are dumb, nor can I, pleading, gain  
The secret where my child's feet tireless stray.



*SONGS.*



HER SHIPS.

“ Oh, ships ! ” she said : “ with white sails drifting  
past,

Like stately phantoms, fading from my view,  
Out on the ocean, measureless and vast,  
Hidden and lost beyond the horizon blue  
What sweeps of unknown shores are distant,  
luring you ? ”

“ Oh, ships ! ” she said : “ I cannot see your way,  
Mine eyes with mists of blinding tears are wet ;  
What birds may haunt your masts, what wild winds  
sway,

My heart cries out, with passionate regret  
For its own ships gone down — their radiant  
shores unmet.”

“ Sail slower, ” she said : “ Oh, ships ! still slower  
sail !

Nor reach too soon the mystic, beckoning line ;

Beyond, the splendor of the sky may pale ;  
Still let the sunlight on your white sails shine,  
Flashing a hope to me, in messages divine."

"No more," she said; "I see the ships no more;  
Only are left the marvellous sea and sky :  
Only the pathos of the silent shore:  
Only my soul's illimitable cry  
For sweeps divinely fair, where love's white sails  
shall lie."

**IT WAS IN SPRING.**

It was in Spring, when all the tides run high,  
Your footsteps, keeping time with Spring's, came  
nigh ;

The April sun hung golden in the west ;  
The clouds drank color from its glittering breast ;  
The fitful south winds, warm with rain, blew by ;  
A line of fire burned straight adown the sky ;  
I saw a dove through violet flushes fly,  
With snowy heaving bosom, to her nest :

It was in Spring.

I saw afar the shining river lie,  
With its new tides too swollen to deny  
A rush like thousand hearts. You know the rest, —  
How fast the leaves unrolled ; how, silver prest,  
The willows broke to starry ecstasy :

It was in Spring.

You know the rest. How the May blossoms to  
Their faint-traced veins the morning's warm  
blood drew ;

How the sleep-giving poppies, all aflame  
With wine of their own perfumes, sudden grew  
Drunken with sleep, heeding nor sun nor dew ;  
How June, that plunged itself to roses, flew ;  
How, note by note, the golden music came :

You know the rest.

How, hence forevermore, will bloom anew  
The silver willows, smiling back to you ;  
And mighty rush of your own heart will shame  
The tumult of the April tides that came ;  
How Spring, that reached to Heaven, may run all  
through :

You know the rest.

I SAID TO SUMMER.

I said to Summer : "Sweet, thou art  
Like an illusive butterfly,  
And losest to the flowers thy heart,  
While radiantly  
Through gold-lit air, thou swift-winged fliest,  
And flower-kissed, diest.  
"Thou diest — and if I could but part,  
With spirit wings, the gold-lit air,  
And reach, oh late-kissed dead, thy heart —  
Lost mid the flowers somewhere —  
I might, all passionately twined,  
My own heart find."

## I MIGHT FORGET.

I might forget, if but the earth would stay  
Ice bound ; if waters would not break  
From crystal sources, and so find their way  
The thirst of the young budding violets to slake,  
I might forget.

I might forget, if skies thin veiled in mist  
Would not o'ertriumph in their radiant blue;  
If harebells, erewhile sleeping, were not kissed,  
From azure dreams, to waken as they do,  
I might forget.

If budding cornels in the forest ways  
To silver stars the sunshine would not shake,  
If something did not seem to haunt the days,  
As if their very splendor sheathed an ache,  
I might forget.

If birds would not outpour the songs that burn  
Their breasts with ecstasy, each opal dawn,  
When to the affluent beauty I should turn  
Amid the noiseless bloom, a presence gone  
I might forget.

And yet — I would not stay the flooding blush  
That makes magnolias' opening hearts divine ;  
But with hot tears, that passionately rush,  
I drink to Heaven my sorrow's unspilled wine,  
Nor can forget.

**MINER JIM.****AFTER AN EXPLOSION.**

So, comrades, this is death ! Well, death's a friend.  
You only whispered, but I heard, " Jim's done."  
Life's been most dreadful tangled ; here's an end,  
    And I'm a lucky one,  
To catch the thread without a longer fight.  
I'm not afraid. The parson used to say,  
" God only judged us 'cording to our light' ;  
I'll take my chance — perhaps He'll lead the way  
And let the angels pass the time o' day.  
Curious . . . I've been so puzzled. When I fell  
I did not feel a single bit of fear,  
Though the dark mine became a glittering cell  
    And heaven looked very near.  
Ah ! dying is not much. I always knew  
Since I was but a working lad, so high,  
That living was the hardest of the two.

But still — I'm feard the little chaps will cry ;  
They'll miss me when they watch you going by ;  
You see, the little chaps was mighty nice.  
They loved me so ; that kept my thinking white —  
And miners' grim is wholesomer than vice —

I've tried to teach them right.

Who'll see to them ? Their mother's dead, you  
know ;

I used to think God had a grudge 'gainst me ;  
But now — the thread has got untangled so,  
I guess He knows. The little chaps will be  
His care. But still I'm feard they'll cry for me.

So, breath comes shorter ! Comrades, lift me  
higher.

I'm glad the parson taught me how to read ;  
And once he said, "God's peace shall crown  
desire."

I did not take much heed ;  
But now it seems all written out in light —  
Suffer ? Oh, no ! the parson's words were wise.

Something — what is it? — seems to blind my  
sight ;  
I thought, a moment, that it was God's eyes.  
Don't touch me. Hush ! I rise — and rise — and  
rise.

RADIANT BIRDS ARE SINGING.

I.

Radiant birds are singing, singing  
While the dewy May departs ;  
Summer, swallow-winged, is springing  
To the daisies' golden hearts ;  
Comes the summer e'er so fleet,  
I shall still wait summer, sweet !

II.

Silver waves are leaping, leaping  
On the ocean's dazzling breast,  
And the perfumed winds are sweeping  
From the mountain's sunlit crest ;  
Silver waves may singing beat,  
I shall hear but sighing, sweet !

III.

When I see the passion, passion  
Of the roses break to flame,

I shall weeping, weeping fashion  
What the spring held, when it came.  
I shall hear no rush of feet —  
Silence will engulf me, sweet !

## IV.

Hush, oh radiant birds, your singing,  
Mist clad, let the spring go by ;  
Swifter than a swallow springing  
Springs my summer to the sky ;  
Azure heavens mine eyes may meet,  
But thou shonest higher, sweet !

GOOD NIGHT.

If I could only lay me down to rest,  
Crossing my weary hands upon my breast,  
And shut my troubled eyes without a fear,  
Knowing that they would never open here —  
How blissful it must be, both worlds in sight,  
To say my tired “Good night.”

If only, from the fretting cares of Time,  
To truths eternal I at once might climb,  
Nor longer count the graves whereon I tread,  
But in one moment be all comforted —  
If such could be, what joy, in upward flight,  
To sing my tired “Good night.”

I watch the sweetest flowers throughout the morn,  
I look, and lo ! at noontide they are gone ;  
The wings of sorrow are forever spread ;  
I weep, but weeping brings not back my dead.

If God would but reveal the breaking light,  
How sweet to say "Good night."

This flooding tide of yearnings will not cease ;  
I cannot reach to touch the lips of Peace ;  
Nor can I gather to my sobbing heart  
The white-winged angels God has set apart,  
Yet haply I may find them all in sight

After some tired "Good night."

What wonder, then, that I should long to rest,  
Crossing my weary hands upon my breast ;  
To shut my troubled eyes without a fear,  
Knowing that they would never open here ;  
To say to Earth, with Heaven alone in sight,  
My rapturous "Good night."

IF.

I.

If you should go away from me, and take  
The splendor of your eyes to some far place ;  
If thoughts, that from your lips inspired break,  
Were heard no more on earth, but piercing space,  
And, swept like organ-music through the skies,  
Should reach, in upward way, diviner ears ;  
If, while I wept, angels should recognize  
The angel I was grieving, would my tears,  
Dropt on your silent face, my heart's love show ?  
Sweet ! would you know ?

II.

If I should watch the summer flowers return,  
And know your pulseless hands could never  
hold ;  
If cloudless sapphire arches seemed to yearn  
Downward to earth, as with some news untold ;

If, when the moons were lit, you could not see  
    Their rays, like strings of some ethereal lyre ;  
If, lonely 'neath the stars, my soul should be  
    Blazing with hot despair's consuming fire,—  
Would this undying pain my heart's love show ?  
    Sweet ! would you know ?

## III.

Ah ! let me say what you have been to me  
    These golden years ! Nor can I dream a woe  
More bitter than were mine, if you should be  
    Lifted to glories you have pictured so.  
But sometimes comes a far-off look, that seems  
    As if your finer vision caught a light  
Denied to me, and strange ecstatic themes  
    Fill your exalted song, betokening flight :—  
Could I to Heaven's high guest my heart's love  
        show,  
    Sweet ! would you know ?

UNCONQUERED.

With tearless eyes, I turned my face away ;  
And, "Art thou conquered ?" to my soul I said.  
Up in the heavens, the full moon seemed to sway,  
As if to wrap its splendor round my dead :  
    I saw, like a great amethyst, afar  
        One burning star.  
  
No quivering motion to the pale lips came ;  
Nor moonlight glare the close-shut lids could part,  
Nor thousand, nor ten thousand swords of flame  
Could bring one protest from my ashen heart :  
    And still, like a great amethyst, afar  
        Burned that one star.  
  
The scent of flowers came, agonizing sweet ;  
The sea, with summer pulsing, went its way,  
Then backward on the shore soft rocked and beat,  
While in the moonlit calm my sleeper lay :  
    And still, like a great amethyst, afar  
        Burned that one star.

And, "Art thou conquered, O my soul?" I said;  
"For still thou lovest!" Scent of flowers swept  
by;

And ocean, silver singing, hushed my dead;  
And still the moon swayed golden in the sky:  
And still, like a great amethyst, afar  
Burned that one star.

"Nay, soul, thou lovest, nor art conquered yet;  
For still thou lovest!" Looking up, I knew  
Where God's feet led,—as if his pity let  
A shimmer of his radiant Presence through:  
And still, like a great amethyst, afar  
Burned that one star.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Mine eyes are dazzled as I turn to scan  
The marvels of this Century. Some mighty plan  
Shapes the world's movements, as some law divine  
Shapes harmonies. The Past is never dumb :  
Behold, some present is its golden sign,  
    Its golden sun ;  
    And Beauty's sacred flower  
Blooms through the ages with immortal power.  
    Yea, though so long since slain,  
Set radiant in our midst, to-day, Greece lives again.  
What miracles have not been wrought ?  
Stars, men foretold, have to the heavens been  
    caught  
And shine in place : With fires of lightning, lo,  
Unwondering, flashed from place to place, we go :  
We speak to friends afar, and hear  
Their voices, as by magic, answering clear :

Our souls adoring bow : One King we own,  
One King we crown and throne,  
Divine as from the Immortals brought,  
Imperial, mighty ruler of this Century — Thought.

And poets have arisen,  
With deathless passion nothing could imprison,  
And sung their noble lyrics to the sun,  
As if, perchance, their ecstasy were won  
From nightingales. Sculptors have wrought  
Their burning visions into marble till they brought  
Its chill almost to warmth. Men have dreamed  
dreams that Time,  
Lifting to action, swept to deeds sublime.

The fettered have been freed :  
Outgrown and left behind, each narrow creed :  
And Woman, higher than those ancient Greeks,  
With heart and soul and brain that outlet seeks  
In Science, Poetry, Philosophy and Art,  
Makes noble part  
Of this majestic era, and has written her name  
Upon this splendid Century's heart in fires of silver  
flame.

TO JULIA WARD HOWE

ON HER BIRTHDAY, MAY 27.

Bring the daffodils, gold-petaled, with the sunshine  
hid between,  
Bring the lilies, moonlight-raptured, in the splen-  
dor of their sheen,  
Bring the Spring's divine incarnate for this poet,  
who has seen

“The glory of the Lord.”

Let the heart of May beat quicker, that her birth-  
day in it lies ;  
Let the violets spring bluer, that their bloom first  
met her eyes ;  
Let the sun shine out more radiant, that its light  
could not disguise

“ The glory of the Lord.”

In a strain of high rejoicing, filling tribute to the day,

Let the birds sing out triumphant, as if sunrise lit the way ;

She has seen beyond the sunrise, what our eyes in vain essay,

“ The glory of the Lord.”

In the passion of her lyric, Truth outbroke to silver flame ;

And its echoes, rolling downward, to the world will bear her name.

Youth will be her own forever, who has kissed the lips of Fame,

Seen “ the glory of the Lord.”

In that hour of revelation, God himself the poet crowned ;

She has seen the chariots coming, she has heard the chariots’ sound ;

Let her soul’s prophetic vision wrap her evermore around

With “ the glory of the Lord.”

A REVERIE.

Draw the curtains closely in the silent room,  
Let the moon's bare splendor other ways illume,  
Let the stars, ungazed on, slay the azure gloom.

In the wavering darkness leave my soul and me,  
And with mystic searching, eyes in eyes may see  
The empurpled stretches of Love's heaving sea.

From the earth mists lifted, flashing dream on  
dream,  
Through my senses rushing, grows to light su-  
preme,  
Till, in red auroras, inspirations stream.

From the cold dead levels to the mountain's peak,  
That the yellow sunbeams spilled from daybreaks  
seek,  
In a mood exalted I can hear God speak.

From the tragic bases, where the angels lie  
Carven on the marbles, pointing to the sky,  
Toward the heaven they signal, float my soul and I.

With unfettered pinions I would fain essay—  
Tracking radiant plumage, finding thus the way—  
In the dazzling spaces, evermore to stay.

Draw the curtains closely, and let me, tired, rest.  
I have sacred knowledge hidden in my breast.  
Have I seen archangels? Let my soul attest.

SOMEWHERE.

Somewhere the summer bloom has joined the  
sadder spring :

Somewhere my aching heart has lost the power to  
sing.

The days go by ;

The grieving sunsets die ;

And yet I make no outward moan or cry ;

I only say,

Somewhere : —

Then turn away.

Somewhere seems so afar I cannot give it place ;  
My dove, in sudden flight, seems lost in darkened  
space ;

The leaves fall fast,

I hear the autumn blast ;

It was not sobbing when I heard it last ;

Yet still I say,

Somewhere : —

Then turn away.

With vain protest I seek this mystery to find ;  
I cannot search the skies nor fathom worlds be-  
hind :

Nothing replies ;  
Nature is silent-wise ;  
The lingering beauty and the verdure dies ;  
Yet still I say,  
Somewhere :—  
Then turn away.

Somewhere ; only a breath, and autumn, too, will  
go ;  
All seasons are the same, yet through the drifting  
snow,  
I may not see  
The green earth mocking me,  
I shall be left with grief and memory ;  
Yet still may say,  
Somewhere :—  
Then turn away.

If, when with tears no more, I count the seasons  
o'er  
(Knowing not which of all the saddest message  
bore)

If then love's chain  
I may take up again  
Without its breaks, I have not wept in vain ;  
The great unknown,  
Somewhere,  
Will be my own.

## A SUMMER DAY.

## I.

O birds that singing soar to heaven away !  
Tell me to-day,  
What soft enchantment fills the summer air  
Drifting the marvellous sunshine everywhere ?  
And why  
The river rippling at my feet doth sigh,  
While on its breast the rapturous lilies lie ?  
Tell me, — for oftentimes in a day like this,  
Pierced with a pain that is but affluent bliss,  
I also sigh,  
And dreaming, dream till the sweet day goes by.

## II.

Tell me, O sky that seemest so remote,  
On which no light clouds float,  
If what doth seem divineness of your hue,  
Is mist of heavenly azure melting through ?

Oh say,

If whispering leaves that in the sunlight play  
Quiver with golden mystery of the day ?  
Tell me, — for oftentimes in a day like this,  
Pierced with a pain that is but affluent bliss,  
I, quivering, sigh,  
And dreaming, dream till the sweet day goes by.

III.

Tell me, O earth ! for ah ! I fain would know,  
What thrills me so.

The singing of the birds grows faint and far ;  
Sing they more softly where the angels are ?

Make sign,

Ye steadfast hills that in the distance shine ;  
Only to live to-day seems so divine  
That I could half forget my saddest years ;  
And yet — and yet — my soul is steeped in tears ;  
I can but sigh,  
And dreaming, dream till the sweet day goes by.

## TO —

When I am laid away, too sound asleep  
    To feel the sunshine falling on my face,  
Or hear the birds that near the windows sweep,  
    Singing, as if to win me from my place, —  
Unstirring even, although the sky should grow  
    Into its azure most intense and deep,  
But rapt as with the things I seem to know,  
    Yet cannot wake to tell, so sound asleep, —  
Because you love me, sweetheart, you will weep.  
  
If, stooping then, you tender smooth my hair,  
    And touch my forehead softly, as of old,  
I think my lips unconsciously will wear  
    A loftier smile, although so marble cold.  
It will seem strange to you no more to feel  
    The beating of my heart, so strong and deep,  
But the new silence will, perchance, reveal  
    Completion of my soul's new song, whose sweep  
May reach as high as Heaven,— but you will weep.

And I — I should be grieved, although afar,  
    If on my face no tender tears should fall,  
If in your “ heart of heart ” you wore no scar  
    That I should know as love, where “ love is all.”  
Perhaps the thought is childish — let it go—  
    But still it seems the angels could not keep  
My soul content if those I loved below  
    Could be unmoved the while I lay asleep,  
And so, because you love me, you will weep.

## SHERMAN'S LAST MARCH.

FEBRUARY 14, 1891.

“ Halt ! ” breathed a muffled voice.  
“ Ensheath thy sword, lay down thine arms :—  
No more the battle’s bugles or alarms  
Shall rouse thy lion heart. Rejoice ! ”  
Yet, spite Death’s mandate low,  
Despite a nation’s woe,  
Sherman marched on —  
Marched on triumphantly,  
As when he led his armies to the sea —  
Marched on !  
O Death ! thou could’st not stay  
A hero, dauntless set upon his way  
To a new planet, toward eternal peace ;  
Thou could’st not touch him, save with pain’s sur-  
cease ;  
For while thou spakest, even,  
Sherman marched on — to Heaven.

Where, then, thy sting, O Death ? since he  
Has heard God's roll call ; where thy victory,  
O grave ? since he has made reply :

Can Sherman die ?

Nay ; glory-girded, one more battle won,  
He has marched on.

Choke back your sobs, O men !  
He has outstripped the sun — what then ?  
The spring that cometh soon, will let  
Her gently falling tear-drops wet  
His new made grave.

Nature will weep, but men — men do not weep the  
brave.

Lay his sheathed sword upon his breast  
After life's burning warfare ; peace is best.  
Let dust to dust return, nothing can shroud  
The soul of Sherman. Be not overbowed  
With grief, rather let joy exalt ;  
For even Death's grim " Halt ! "

His progress could not stay ;  
He saw the coming day  
And 'neath the sunrise marched, as toward the sea,  
Marched — marched — to immortality.

A SEASIDE SKETCH.

If I could only paint a picture, fair  
As that on which I look, color the air  
With golden light, and o'er it fling the haze  
That gives the splendor of September days  
Such tender pathos ; whose blue sky should make,  
Touching the blue sea, no outlined break, —  
Then I should say, " Desire is answered for thy  
sake."

And I would show, with artist's lavish hand, —  
Processions of the golden rod that stand  
Guarding the pathways, moving to and fro  
To silvery measures that the breezes blow ;  
And asters, purpling on the heart of day  
With memories of the clouds, that lingering lay  
Upon the twilight's breast, from sunsets swept  
away ;  
And scarlet pimpernels that dot the shore ;

And birds, low darting; and the tides that pour  
The fullness of their passion and lament  
On the sea's heart, with beating never spent:  
The pallor of the sand — the shifting light —  
The tired glory creeping out of sight —  
And the swift swooping wings of the dim hovering  
night.

Ah! who can wonder that I fain would weep,  
Since fairest things we may not always keep?  
If, from the year's bloom, drifting to decay,  
I could cut out the splendor of a day,  
It were so much — and yet, so much to leave.  
Earth's impotence is mighty: and the eve,  
Grieving the moon's delay, doth hide me while I  
grieve.

MY LADYE'S EYES.

Fairer than the morning's blush,  
Lovelier than the noontide airs,  
Sweeter than the springtime's hush,  
Is the smile my ladye wears ;  
As if the enchanting light  
From some June-bent crescent's grace  
Dropt a glory, soft and white,  
On my ladye's face,  
My ladye's face.

When my ladye's face I met,  
Wherfore should my heart recall  
Bloom of early violet ?  
It held Springtime — that was all.  
When her soft eyes looked in mine,  
Touched to tears, I turned away,  
For in hers there shone divine,  
All the hope of May,  
The hope of May.

Let my ladye smile, and bear  
In her soul the springtime set,  
Breathing music unaware,  
Fine as nightingale's regret ;  
For a glory unconfined,  
Fairer than in crescent lies,  
From the whole high heaven behind  
Lights my ladye's eyes,  
My ladye's eyes.

**I PRAYED THE ETERNAL HEART.**

I prayed the Eternal Heart, one marvellous night  
When the stars waked with me and sent their  
fire

Down through the violet glooms until their light  
Pulsed strong within me and a strange desire  
To know their awful ecstasy was mine, —  
Give me one Song divine.

Silent and swift a mighty passion grew ;  
And thundering waters heaving brake apart,  
And the cramped prison walls of thought burst  
through  
And fell to cataracts in my stormy heart.  
I felt my blood in torrents poured along,  
Scarlet and hot with Song.

Quick throbbed the scintillating summer heats  
Upon the sky's great brow, whereon still lay  
The illumined stars ; and, as if soul of Keats

Beckoned from each, my song lit up the way.  
The whole gold score amid the planets shone,—  
God-written, yet my own.

Magnificent, above my pulses' roar,  
I heard the silence rushed to music's height,  
And felt my spirit all untrammeled soar,  
Caught to the blazing melody in sight :  
I prayed the Eternal Heart one Song divine,  
And the stars' Song — was mine.

## ROBERT BROWNING.

Nay, Death ! here's your master, — from his  
crowded heart and brain

There was nothing you could capture, nothing but  
his pain !

All his human searches have been merged in  
truths sublime,

And his thoughts, immortal winging, broken bounds  
of time.

Here's your master ; here's our leader — leader set  
new heights to climb.

“ Nobler than a warrior's glory he has won,” we  
say.

He has led the world's great chorus in its high  
array ;

From the passion and the discord, from the jar  
and fret,

With his king's brow, song-encircled, chorus new  
has met.

Here's your master ; here's our leader, with his  
seven-rayed coronet.

What to him are now earth's grandeurs ? In his  
new estate,

All that life gave, all that death gave, he can es-  
timate

At a saint's true value. Like a heaven-flashed  
scimetar

Sweeps his song, swift-clad in glory, through the  
spaces far.

Here's your master ; here's our leader, lifted  
kingly to a star.

**ASK ME NOT WHY.**

Ask me not why I turn my face away,  
Nor stay to listen, e'en to sweetest singing ;  
Why, to my saddened heart, the sunniest day  
Seems only as if darkened shadows bringing.

Ask me not why —  
It would but make you sigh.

Ask me not why the moonlight pale and fair  
Seems sadder than the skies' tumultuous weeping ;  
Why stars that glisten seem to mock despair,  
As set to watch a little child's sound sleeping.

Ask me not why —  
It would but make you sigh.

Ask me not why the sweetest summer rose  
Brings keener anguish than the dead leaves' sigh-  
ing,  
As pitiless to bloom when dear eyes close

And Love makes protest 'gainst Death's calm  
denying.

Ask me not why —

It would but make you sigh.

Ask me not why, for pain is consecrate;  
It would not lessen grief to tell my grieving :  
And yet earth's pangs may pierce to peace most  
great,

And love denied may grow to love's receiving :

Nay do not sigh —

God shall make answer why,

JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY.

THE DEAD SINGER.

Call you this singer dead? This singer, who —  
Bringing an angel's birthright here below —  
Sent fires of living music streaming through  
The pulses of the world? You do not know —  
Seeing, perchance, the smiling lips so white,  
Your ears too earthly dull'd to hear so far —  
How exquisite the notes that traverse light  
And reach the song's perfection star by star.  
Hush! let the seas lament him — do not weep,  
He only, singing, sang himself to sleep.

Statued to marble ecstasy he lies,  
While cadences of silence round him fall :  
But the freed passion of his song may rise,  
And even in Heaven, the eternal heart enthrall.  
Flashing among the cherubim, he wears  
His thought-rayed oriflamme of song, as right.

Nor call him dead, who, winged with music, bears  
An anthemed rapture to the Infinite.  
Hush ! let the seas lament him — do not weep,  
He only, singing, sang himself to sleep.

DANTE TO BEATRICE.

Behold the God of song  
Has sent the lightning of his music down ;  
And the fork'd flames leap passionate and strong  
Across my heart, — yea, burning, leap along ;  
Nor fiery scars I shun, lest in dead seas I drown.

From out my youthful ease,  
I have arisen ; I am content no more  
With my own breath, nor can my soul appease  
With wine, wherein I see the unfiltered lees ;  
Nought but the blood of song henceforward will I  
pour.

And thou, sweet angel, thou  
May'st teach me, by the calm within thine eyes,  
To bear the splendor of thine iris'd brow,  
Till, flooded, at thy virgin side I bow,  
Climbing by my own scars into thy paradise.

## TO A BLUEBIRD.

Sweep from the south, O bird with azure wings,  
That comest, breathless singing on thy way,  
And bring to me the joy of other springs,  
The joy of springs that held divinest things ;  
For I am sad to-day.

The pink arbutus, growing sweet and fair,  
Will soon lie blooming, heart to heart with May,  
And willow boughs will silver splendors wear :  
Thy soul unbare, in some ungrieving air,  
For I am sad to-day.

Dimming its blue, each violet that appears  
Will wear a film ; and on each lilyed spray  
Something within its flowers will shine like tears.  
Sing back the years when sunshine held no spears,  
For I am sad to-day.

And yet, O bird, if thou should'st straightway soar,  
And sing to me thy most ecstatic lay,  
The violets would not gladden, as of yore,  
My tears would pour, my heart would cry "No  
more!"

For I am sad to-day.

**ROSES' HEARTS.**

I looked into the roses' hearts, and lo !  
They were not roses' hearts. They were the red  
Of summer dawns and summer sunsets sped ;  
Their perfumes woke a song that else were dead.

Perchance — I do not know —  
They were the glow  
Of August nights, with red moons hanging low.

Perchance they but interpret stars, and so  
As attar'd colors of the stars, that know  
The whole magnificence of heaven, they grow  
And blushing with their blissful knowledge, blow.

Perchance — I do not know —  
They are the glow  
Of August nights, with red moons hanging low.

TO ONE AFAR.

I.

The autumn days are lit  
With fires of scarlet bloom, and, songless, flit  
The shadowy outlined birds that southward sway ;  
Moon-risen vapors slowly burn away  
And leave uncovered in its matchless blue  
The breast of heaven ! The winds, blown through  
The gorgeous-colored leaves, bring hints divine  
Of unforgotten summer, and the wine  
From the grapes' purple veins is still unfreed :  
But thou, sweet, knowest not. Thou dost not heed.  
I stand in shadow of my soul's eclipse —  
Thou in the light of the apocalypse.

II.

The flaming orange sun  
Drops countless lances from its gold o'errun  
Down on the valley's grass, and wakes to sound  
The crickets dreaming on the silent ground ;

The blood of June still stirs the autumn's heart,  
And, as of twilight's tender gloom a part,  
The whippoorwills breathe out their sweet dismay  
To the far hills that guard the forest ways.  
Still shines the yarrow 'mid the waysides green ;  
A few late purple clover blooms are seen ;  
June's joys nor autumn's pain can I forget, —  
Thine is the summer, sweet ! mine the regret.  
I stand in shadow of my soul's eclipse —  
Thou in the light of the apocalypse.

**UNSUNG.**

I heard, elusive, sweeping by,  
The song that I had sought in vain ;  
But, wrapt in mystery on high,  
Came through the silence of the sky  
One azure strain.

I saw the Day in countless hues  
On bosom of the Twilight die ;  
Nor knew which color I should choose  
Where hid the song, and so must lose  
The ecstasy.

I saw the moon with dazzling rim  
On edge of the horizon hung,  
And heard the echoes faint and dim,  
As if amid the seraphim  
That song was sung.

Sing on, O seraphim ! Some night,  
Perchance, when I have listened long,  
I shall awak'n from slumber white  
And reach in an untrammelled flight  
That azure song.

MAGNOLIAS.

Twice, in one year, the white magnolias blew,  
The year my golden singer went away ;  
Once, when the deep-hued August flowers grew,  
And cuckoos, through the twilights, called  
    “cuckoo,”  
        And once — in May.

Magnolias, by the summer suns caressed,  
Came back to bloom — but fairer sunshine kept  
My singer unawakened, on Spring’s breast ;  
Nor cuckoos’ twilight call could stir his rest,  
    So sound he slept.

**JUST FOR ONE HOUR.**

Just for one hour, if I could be a rose,  
With exquisite impassioned power of blowing,  
My soul might find expression for its woes,—  
Its agony of love in sweetness showing,—  
And I should know of life all that is worth the  
knowing.

Just for one hour, if it could be no more,  
To wear the bloom unshadowed by denying ;  
Then I should be content my soul to pour,  
Divinely living while divinely dying,—  
Then I should know of life something beyond its  
sighing.

**BEAT, BEAT, MY SOUL !**

Beat, beat, my soul, beyond the day's flush'd rim,  
On golden tides of music borne along,  
Into the twilight, passionate and dim,  
Where, far-off, lie the mystic shores of song.  
    Beat, beat, my soul !

Beat, beat, until the dusky shadows lend  
Their color to the waves, pulsed to and fro,  
Till from the violet deeps that brooding bend,  
The splendid stars are set in deeps below.  
    Beat ! beat, my soul !

Beat, to the silvery rush of a refrain  
On harmonies that modulate and sway,  
Till the moon's slender arc is lit again  
And the blue darks of silence roll away.  
    Beat, beat, my soul !

Beat, stormy-winged, until the full sea shakes  
Its music-heaving breast to billows strong,  
Till a great tidal wave outbursts and breaks  
And lifts you singing to the shores of song.  
    Beat, beat, my soul !

**SERENADE.**

Here's the golden wonder,  
Crowning summer days,  
Full moon shining yonder,  
In a sea-green haze ;  
Floods of splendor falling  
Passionate and still ;  
Here's the low, soft calling  
Of the whippoorwill.  
'Neath the bloom and shine, love,  
Sleep with dreams divine, love !  
All my heart is thine, love,  
Sleep ! sleep on !

Here's the lake a-shimmer,  
Light o'erleaping gloom ;  
June's heart all a-glimmer,  
Palpitating bloom ;  
Flower, all June's surpassing !  
Wild-rose, fairest blown !  
Here's a soul's joy, massing,  
To a rainbow grown.  
'Neath the bloom and shine, love,  
Sleep with dreams divine, love !  
All my heart is thine, love,  
Sleep ! sleep on !

LAVENDER.

Within her hand a faded leaf she pressed,  
While sunset hues were lingering in the west ;  
And all the silence of the later gloom  
Was haunted with the Lavender's perfume :  
I could not answer which was sweeter, — Death,  
or bloom.

The hand I kissed : the leaf I could not take.  
I thought, bruised hearts may sing, and singing  
break ;  
And yet the song remains, as dust of leaf :  
The perfume of a life may be its grief ;  
And bliss its early flower, though blooming time  
is brief.

Ah ! sad, sweet Lavender ! I dare not say  
What subtle meanings odors can convey :  
Most fitting it would seem, that yours should blend  
With living memories ; lingering to the end  
In the deserted drawers of some dear, vanished  
friend.

**SONG.**

Soul ! Why this infinite dismay ?  
On life's insurgent bosom tost,  
I knew its joy—I pay the cost.

Night drifts away,  
Heaven holds the day,—  
All is not lost.

Soul ! thou art not a coward then ?  
My scorn mounts high.— Nay, I repent  
Not one wild heart-beat I have spent.

Love is not vain,  
Song is not slain,—  
Soul ! be content.

## JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

AUGUST 12, 1891.

The Poet sleeps ; no more he dreameth dreams  
Beneath the glittering stars, — to wake and tell.  
No more he, clarion-voiced, will sing away  
Men's heavy burdens and with mighty minstrelsy  
Smite, note by note, their fetters free.  
Ah ! what divine and wondrous themes  
Are his to choose, whose feet now stray  
In heavenly fields ; who, living, loved so well  
The flowers that hidden in the wild woods dwell,  
That every tender grace they wore  
He set in some sweet song to bloom forevermore !

The Poet sleeps. His was no wearied flight  
That circled upward to the infinite :—  
And yet, deep-hidden, his heart wore scars  
That shone to heaven like stars.  
How deep and wonderful the peace  
He weareth now ! Death with its high release

Has brought him sweep  
Of the illimitable harmonies.  
So — let him sleep ;  
New visions and new flowers he sees,  
And unastonished hears  
Sublime immensities of song outlyrick'd by the  
spheres.

O silent Poet ! in thy hushed heart lies  
Knowledge of unencompassed mysteries.  
Thou sleepest well ; and yet — our eyes are wet.  
If thy mute lips could breathe the world's regret,  
Then fit the song. Elsewhere thy soul has found  
Music ineffable, and so been crowned  
With cadences celestial ; thou art  
Of the Eternal Symphony a part,  
And 'neath thine eyes  
In the white light of heaven eternal beauty lies.

## HINGHAM CEMETERY.

## MEMORIAL DAY.

It is not flowers in any garden grown  
That I would pluck, however fair their grace,  
To lay — where for so long the sun has shone —

On my child's resting-place ;—  
For roses with their reddest hearts, nor yet  
The passion-flowers that symbolled crosses bear,  
Would breathe the insurgent passion of regret

My soul must ever wear ;—  
But with supreme outreaching I would fling  
The whole wild-flower rapture of the whole young  
Spring.

To-day, let azure in the skies abide,  
And sunshine kiss the grasses where he lies ;  
For time, nor tears, nor even Death, can hide  
The vision of his eyes.

But not for him the martial strains that surge,  
And, crashing through the air, mine ears await,

As if despair, through music's pang, would urge  
    Itself articulate ;  
But 'bove my radiant boy let bluebirds sing,  
As to some sky-swept bird their songs again might  
    bring.

He will not wake. — He sings in upper air,  
The Spring enwraps him like another Spring,  
His heart, that sent out sunshine everywhere,  
    Went sunward wandering,  
Nor with earth's bloom could wholly be content,  
But to the unforgotten angels drew,  
And, with full measure of youth's gladness, went  
    The morning sunrise through :  
And by his tide-watched grave unceasing rise,  
As echoing my soul, the sea's lamenting sighs.

**A YELLOW CHRYSANTHEMUM.**

Late Autumn flower ! your petals hold  
The passion of a thousand suns,  
That through your veins, transfused to gold,  
In color runs.

You come when other flowers are dead,  
And songless winds your tassels sway  
When from the harvest moon its red  
Has burned away.

Yet something of its fire intense,  
And heat of summer noons as well,  
In your sun-hued magnificence  
Somewhere may dwell.

Oh, poet-flower ! if, seeing your gold,  
I felt no rushing joy, that sped  
To music, then my heart were cold,  
And song were dead.

**A FANTASIE.**

I cannot find the way,  
Mine eyes see nought but dark ;  
The music I essay  
A thousand discords slay ;  
Yet something like an arc  
Sometimes across the sky  
Sweeps luminous with light.  
It is a fantasie —  
A vision taking flight —  
Night.

I see the dark, until  
Mine eyes are filled with dark ;  
Yet even the midnights thrill ;  
In purples never still  
Hides the immortal lark.  
I cannot reach afar

To notes so mocking high :  
The lark sings to a star.  
It is a fantasie —  
A rapture taking flight —  
Night.

## WHAT IS A ROSE?

## I.

What is a rose? Dear, turn your head away,  
And I will kiss you answer in good-by.  
It is the grief a poet cannot say ;  
A sweet, sad glory, too divine to stay ;  
It is an unshed tear for love's delay,  
That burns the heart the while the eyes are dry ;  
Something between a rapture and a sigh :  
It is — good-by.

What is a rose? Dear, if I saw your eyes,  
I might not kiss you answer in good-by.  
It is a dream within a dream, that lies  
Blushing with sweetness of love's harmonies ;  
It in an angel in a crimson guise ;  
A golden-hearted, burning mystery ;  
Something between a rapture and a sigh :  
It is — good-by.

## II.

What is a rose? A rose is not a rose :  
It is a soul wherein deep mysteries reign ;  
It is a waning moon's regret ; a pain ;  
A song transfix'd, that into perfume goes,  
Telling the all of Love in language that Love knows.

Some wondrous current through its being flows ;  
It is the dead year's passion — crimson taught ;  
It is a dazzling fantasy ; a thought  
That, where it touched the fire of sunrise, shows  
A poet's exaltation attar'd to a rose.

DREAMS.

I would not cut your youthful dreams adrift  
From youth that gave them glow,  
But let life's deeper waters swell and lift  
Diviner dreams that grow.  
    Dreams may go by ;  
    But dreams, — dreams cannot die.

Youth's fairest aspirations are but base  
To fairest work begun :  
Climb, dream by dream, till to the statue's face,  
    The immortal grace is won.  
    Dreams may go by ;  
    But dreams, — dreams cannot die.

**JULIA ROMANA ANAGNOS.**

She waked to Rome : —

Its seven majestic hills that towered away  
Her cradle sentinelled ; and from the dome  
Of its great vast cathedral, day by day  
The longing sunshine dropt, till at her feet it lay.

Her spirit drew

From the charmed atmosphere an unshaped lyre ;  
And the old stately Roman grandeurs grew  
Into her senses as a rose drinks fire  
From splendid summer suns, unconscious of desire.

Like the sky's blue,

With depths unsearchable, she went her ways ;  
The wondering world drew near, while flashing  
through  
Her simple words, came sparks of lyric's blaze,  
Lighted in golden dreams of the old classic days.

Higher than are  
The smiles on Rome's unbreathing statues' lips  
The look she wore, but like some tender star  
That in its occultation shining slips  
Behind some larger light, Heaven drew her to  
eclipse.

And so — she sleeps,  
A nightingale o'er taken by death's dark  
Before the listening skies had heard her deeps  
Of unwaked music, that are rising — Hark ! —  
On the skies' other side, above the rainbow's arc.

**REMEMBRANCE.**

It was only a little sock,  
That was dropt erewhile on the floor ;  
But the shape of the baby's foot it bore,  
And I kiss'd it and laid it away  
— It seems but the other day —  
Now — my lamb is of God's own flock.

And the flood-gates of memory ope :  
With his eyes, that were purple-dark,  
Lighted up as with Heaven's own spark,  
Seraphic, he questioned my own :  
Now — the whole earth has been outgrown,  
And his soul has found infinite scope.

But my heart is wearing a scar  
Of a wound that went down to its root,  
That has shape like a tiny foot.  
This is all — to my mortal sight —  
But an angel sandalled with light  
Is rising from star to star.

TO HELEN IN HEAVEN.

I gave you, on one golden summer's day,  
A rose,— because I knew you fair and sweet ;  
Now that the skies have lured your heart away,

Let roses unplucked stay :  
I cannot reach to lay them at your feet.

And since your wings have crossed the dazzling  
line,

I wonder how I dared your lips to kiss :  
But when in Heaven you pluck a rose divine,  
Wear it, O saint ! as sign  
That deathless love is part of heavenly bliss.

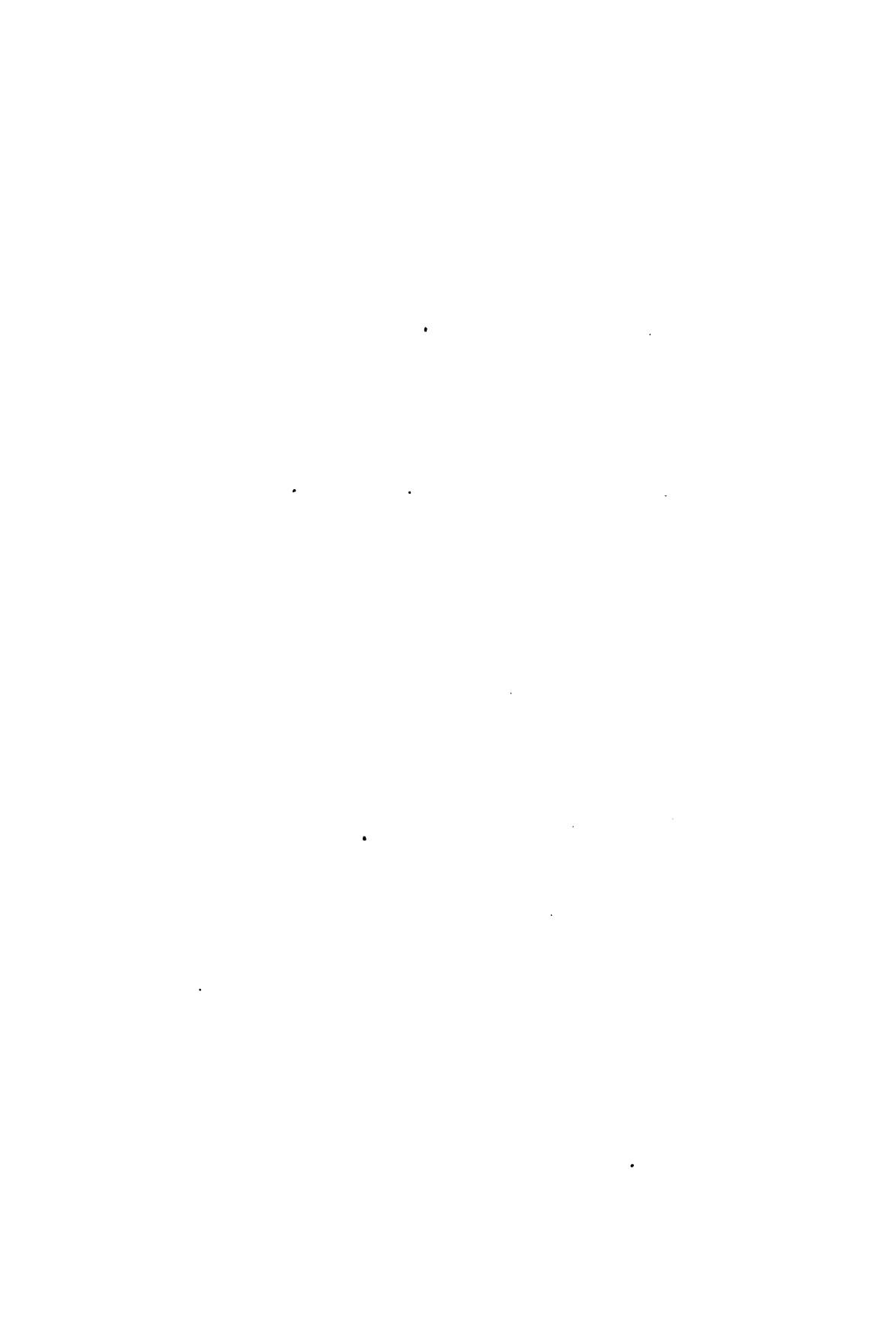
**I SIT BESIDE MY DEAD.**

I sit beside my dead,  
Silent, and cold, and infinitely dear,—  
With passion of my grief uncomforted,  
Watching the autumn moon that rises red,  
Without one grieving moan, one falling tear.

Others I loved have slept,  
Smiling themselves to heaven with lips divine ;  
But then with flooding tenderness I wept  
I knew that all Love's holiest I kept ;  
That, though their hearts were stilled, the  
dead I kissed were mine.

But this is new despair,—  
For majesty of death has been denied ;  
The bitter knowledge in my soul I bear :  
I cannot say Love waiteth otherwhere :  
I sit beside my dead — my dead who has not  
died.

*LAMENTS.*



PRELUDE.

I have looked long, with unforgetting eyes,  
Into the little children's vacant places ;  
Seeing, forevermore, the visions rise  
    Of their immortal faces.

And tears, that oftentimes were too hot to fall,  
That might have eased, a gentle solace bringing,  
From out my heart — as lightning 'scaped from  
    thrall —  
    Have scorched themselves to singing.

**RACHAEL.**

If some white angel had come down and said,  
“God keeps sweet space to lay your darling’s head,”  
And questioned — “Which one, out of all the three  
(My flock so thinned), was dearest unto me ?” —  
Could I have answered, as I should to-day,  
Knowing my whitest dove, though not yet flown  
away ?

Nay ! if he still had tarried, Heavenly sent,  
Saying, “Although your aching heart is spent  
With constant weeping, yet I fain must take  
Your purest lily, for the lily’s sake ” —  
Should I have trembling known which was most  
fair ?  
Would not the one he chose have seemed most  
hard to spare ?

Ah, it is well that angels come not so !  
Love has no choice but drink the dregs of woe.

If in the sacred silence of my heart  
I kept an idol that was set apart,  
Heaven has made claim, and I can never touch  
The forehead of my boy, whose coming was so  
much.

He was my only son : he never knew  
An older brother's care, though there were two,  
Born years ago, with natures all too fine  
For human rearing, that God made divine ;  
And he no longer marvels at the tie  
He scarce could understand, since they were never  
by.

Through the long, silent, summer days, I weep :  
How can the lilies bloom, and he asleep ?  
And memories of his life, foreshadowing  
Its Heaven in sweetness, do but add a sting  
To this, my crowning sorrow, and unsheathe  
A sharp despair, that pierces mightier than grief.

They say that " It is well ! " that " All of bliss  
Is his ! " — but 'tis the living touch I miss.

And of his dawning glory not a doubt  
Ever arises, — but I stand without :  
It needs a higher faith than mine to see,  
Although I know his peace, that “ It is well ” for  
me.

Ah ! many a scathing sorrow have I known ;  
And so familiar has the Presence grown  
That I could almost wonder, when I dare  
To smile, lest weeping come in unaware ;  
And yet my saddened life goes on again : —  
The scabbard of the sword is seldom cut in twain.

If I one hour his little head could hold  
And take the hands I can no more enfold,  
Could press my lips once more upon his face,  
I should be willing then to give him place  
Among the angels ; but it cannot be : —  
My heart has reached ebb-tide, that knew the ful-  
ler sea.

But in that Heaven of which he often spake,  
The little group I miss, for him must make

Companions, that will lead him with delight,  
Through "living pastures," up from "height to  
height;"

And yet, I do not think he will forget,  
Although himself so blissful, how I love him yet.

My tender little boy ; I dare not think  
Of all his fond endearments, lest I sink  
To desolation : — Was it not too much  
To hope to keep him, when I knew that such  
"As angels do their Father's face behold?" —  
And lilies soonest white, are planted in the fold ?

Ah, "they that sow in tears, in joy shall reap :" —  
And I, some day, all tired may fall asleep  
And in one moment find my boy again, —  
Learning through Christ the blessedness of pain.  
God's aftermath is sweeter than the bloom,  
And Heaven shall make most clear what Earth  
has veiled in gloom.

## NOT THAT SONG.

Nay ! not that Song ! I could not bear to hear  
The words he sang, from any lips less dear  
    Than those that God hath stilled :  
For I should feel that every pause was filled  
With pulsing notes of music, all too sweet  
    For human ears to meet :  
    And fancy that I heard  
A sweeping sound, as hush of angels stirred,  
Yet know I could not see their glittering wings,  
Or reach, through the thin air, to where my singer  
    sings.

Not that Song, dear ! Silence may heal the sore ;  
My grief, that will be grief for evermore,  
    Is still too fresh, too new.  
I sometimes wonder what God's children do,  
Through the long years that they must wait, and  
    weep

Until they fall asleep :  
Since I do look with sighs  
On fairest things ; because my soul outcries  
In anguish at the pangs that memory brings,  
Seeming as it must cleave to where my singer sings.  
  
Ah ! the pure eyes that looked with tears in mine,  
Feeling the tender pathos of each line,  
Will gather tears no more.  
  
And while I heard him sing this one song o'er,  
I felt the shadow of the parting near ;  
I said "Too sweet, too dear :"  
But now, more dear, more sweet,  
My panting soul does seem as it must beat  
Its barriers here, and find Love's broader wings,  
Then sweep, in eager flight, to where my singer  
sings.

**HE CAME AS COMES THE SPRING.**

He came as comes the Spring ;  
A cherub, like the Virgin's, radiant-eyed,  
That to your hearts the sunshine seemed to bring,  
As from some kingdom fairer and more wide ;  
A glory on his face, as if he knew  
How near the heavenly place his feet were straying  
to..

Glad in your arms he smiled,  
Leaping to song, and wondering at the stars ;  
Stretching his arm out, like a very child,  
Yet with an angel's power, through crystal bars  
Seeming to see the illumined lilies shine,  
And, while you held him close, chose playmates all  
divine.

Happy, they took his hand,  
Wearing the light of peace that angels wear,  
And, silent, led him to that other land,  
More radiant-eyed, more beautiful than e'er.  
His childish heart grew still with might of bliss :  
It was not Death he knew — it was the Shepherd's kiss.

## AN ANSWER.

Dead ! Do not ask me who ! I cannot tell,  
Whether it was my boy, or I, that fell  
That fair, spring day ;  
Only he died, and smiling went away ;  
And I, who daily die, am never free  
From this material life that fetters me ;  
Yet never soldier on the field has lain,  
With sword-thrust in his heart, more surely slain ;  
Without the bliss of death, which is forgetting pain.

Nay ! do not pity ; for the wound is such  
It will not suffer even the tenderest touch :  
Yet, to forget  
Would leave a deeper scarring than regret ;  
And so, it may be that with surgeons' art  
God only probes to heal my aching heart ;  
Perhaps the angels, if they stood confessed,  
Would say, Love's travailing doth purchase rest ;

That Heaven but makes its claim Love's ownership  
ship to test.

I set the seal of silence on his name ;  
I dare not breathe it, lest this inward flame  
Escaping so

Should devastate my soul with fiercest woe ;  
I cannot even dream of him, though night,  
More kind than wistful day, hides me from sight ;  
Then, weeping my beloved, a solemn sense  
As silence thrilling with omnipotence,  
Seems bringing him more near, through longings  
so intense.

How shall I know what treasures there might be  
Sheathed in that silence, if my heart could see  
And grasp aright ?

How shall I know what questions infinite  
Might then be cleared, if only clue most dim  
Were given to solve God's parting me from him ?  
Soul that dost shrink and tremble with delay,  
Death doth imprison rapture : Who shall say  
Rapture may not be mine, when death shall drop  
away ?

## THE UNUSED TOY.

I closed a drawer, with sudden pang, to-day,  
For 'neath the thing I sought there lay a toy,  
Carven, and cut, and chipped, in childish way —  
    Too sacred to destroy :—

A wooden hammer, that with mimic nails  
Had builded tiny ships (launched forth anon),  
And kept afloat with breath on snowy sails  
    Till narrow shores were won.

How little then I knew those ships that went,  
Slender and gay, across the shallow seas,  
Were but the pastime of an angel, sent  
    To teach Love's mysteries.

For, to the rapture of eternal calms,  
Lifted on noiseless wings, he went away,  
Bearing white lilies in his folded palms,  
    Resting from childish play.

Now, sculptured on a marble's base, they show  
He sleeps, unconscious of my soul's lament,  
While on the Spring's warm bosom still they grow,  
Smiling as when he went.

And could he wander back to earth awhile,  
Crossing the golden threshold, granted leave,  
Heaven would itself be lone without his smile,  
And hush! — he, too, might grieve.

**THRENODY.**

There is a sadness in each summer day ;  
The quivering sunshine shadows seems to wear ;  
For out beyond the hills stretched far away,  
    Love ! thou hast wandered, and I see  
        not where :  
    I do not know the summer, howsoever  
        fair.

There is no gladness in the morning's red ;  
The rising sun but heralds in despair ;  
Weeping, I watch till slow-winged nights are  
    sped.

    Love ! thou hast wandered, but I see  
        not where :  
    I do not know the summer, howsoever  
        fair.

Fruitless my watching, love ! for thou art dead :  
The birds, to waken thee, sing high in air ;  
But lilies bend above thy silent head.

Love ! thou hast wandered, but I see  
not where :  
I do not know the summer, howsoever  
fair.

## ADIEU.

I walked at noontide through the waving grass,  
Where summer daisies in the west winds blew,  
And saw the dragon-fly, slow winging, pass,  
And heard his sharp, sad minors dizzying  
through —

Adieu ! Adieu !

The birds, that sunrise on their bosoms bore,  
In sudden sweeps of flame above me flew,  
And, as with music's passion brimming o'er,  
Dropped liquid notes that fell, with meanings  
new —

Adieu ! Adieu !

The blackberry blossoms into trembling fell,  
And clover-perfumes to their ways gave clue ;  
The roaming wild-bees touched a lily's bell,  
And from its silver heart, slow tolling, drew —  
Adieu ! Adieu !

Nor could I, numbed with cold despair, escape  
The maddening glory of the sky's calm blue ;  
But something on its breast took shadowy shape,  
And to my pain-dull'd soul smiled eyes I knew —  
Adieu ! Adieu !

Still tolled the lilies : weeping tears of blood  
Amid the flowers, Calvary I knew :  
The blinding sunshine held me in its flood ;  
But — oh, my dead first-born ! — the heavens  
held you :  
Adieu ! Adieu !

**LAMENT.**

She could not give me back my kisses, so  
I went away to meet the falling night,  
And told my desolation to the snow,  
And saw the empty nests all still and white.  
“ And this is all ! ” I said :  
“ A kiss — a far-off song — and silence of the dead.”

It was but yesterday that she had pressed  
My hand in hers — a rapture in her eyes ;  
Now she was lying, roses on her breast,  
And with new wings that swept immortal skies.  
“ And this is all ! ” I said :  
“ A smile — a far-off flight — and silence of the  
dead.”

Since then, the birds have built their nests anew,  
And warmer air with singing has been rent ;  
But song nor sighs can pierce the skies' soft blue,  
And reach that other summer where she went.  
    Darkness has fallen instead :  
And there is no reply — but silence of the dead.

**LET ME BUT BE A BIRD.**

Let me but be a bird with power of reaching  
The blue divineness of the skies above,  
And I would sing with passion of beseeching,  
Until the heavens were rent with pain of love ;  
Then, piercing through to mine,  
I might hear answering notes of song divine.

Ah ! what delight, no inward barriers heeding,  
Defying weariness to hold in place,  
One swift, electric flash of thought but needing  
To sweep my soul through sunrise flames of space ;  
Then, seeing the heavens apart,  
I might float through, dear love, and find thy heart.

HIS SIXTH BIRTHDAY.

He would be six to-day ;

My brave, blithe boy : and I have learned to say,  
“ He would have been,” and not, “ He is.”

Yet, pierced with sweetest memories,

I cannot bear to lift my head awhile,  
To meet the coming Spring’s returning smile.  
Other than sunshine now doth blind my eyes ;  
I cannot watch it woo the willing skies :  
Rather the wintry tempests that have swept  
To desolation, weeping while I wept.  
Nay ! when the birds do sing, as if forgetting  
The tidal wave of my last year’s regretting,

Their unchanged rapture seems to wake  
The same tumultuous throes as when my heart did  
break.

Yet, from thine eyes, O Spring !  
I cannot wholly turn, since thou did’st bring

This overflowing cup of joy —  
    The birthday of my absent boy.  
I called thee fair ; then cruel, though still fair,  
With the same hand thou gavest me despair :  
Giving and taking — with just five years' space  
For blind, blind worship, — then the empty place.  
And yet the gentler May did bring the blow  
That left my boy his blissful way to go,  
And me to death. If death could still grief's  
    passion, —  
If only angels some sweet way could fashion  
    To linger near us when we weep, —  
It would not be so hard to let the children sleep.

Ah ! who will take my place,  
And kiss him softly on his upturned face  
With kisses, one for every year,  
    Just as I always used to here ?  
It is the first birthday he ever spent  
Away from me ; no wonder I am rent  
With grievous weeping : yet I know that he  
Doth walk with Christ, and Christ doth pity me.

Child of my inmost depths, take from my soul,  
Outreaching after thee, the Eternal whole  
Of love ! I cannot see his heavenly growing,  
But Sharon's roses are forever blowing ;  
And what did seem his life's eclipse  
Was but Death's shadow lifting him to the Eternal  
lips.

## HIS SEVENTH BIRTHDAY.

He cannot come to-day,  
And lean his loving head upon my breast,  
Bringing me back such blissful sense of rest,  
Or look at me with the old, tender smile  
That I have missed for such a dreary while.  
I cannot tell my boy how he has grown  
Since the last year I held him for my own ;  
But angels may keep festival in Heaven

That he is seven

To-day.

I should not be so sad  
If I could bid my selfish longings fly ;  
His joy would be enough to satisfy.  
But I am weak ; I cannot still the pain,  
Knowing that I shall reach my arms in vain,  
Because he is away. My heart is worn  
All threadbare with regretttings it has borne.  
Ah ! can he hear me say, dwelling in Heaven,  
“Sweet, thou art seven  
To-day” ?

Never but five to me !

With him afar, the birthdays that are past  
Do seem as naught, only as landmarks vast  
Set in my heart's great wilderness of woe.  
And yet it would be sweet if I could know  
How angelhood doth glorify, how bliss  
Transfigures ; but I might not dare to kiss  
His brow, or say, flooded with light of Heaven,

“ Sweet, thou art seven  
To-day.”

And, if his eyes can see  
The infinite horizon that doth sweep  
Into celestial space, why should I weep ?  
I think there will be kept for me a place  
Beside him. He would miss his mother's face  
In the eternal years to come. And I  
Some day may go to him all rapturously,  
And say, with love that shall be made divine,

“ Sweet, thou art mine  
To-day.”

**HIS EIGHTH BIRTHDAY.**

Faithful th' untired spring has brought again  
The birthday of my dead ; and, darting low,  
The birds with whirr of wings sweep to and fro,  
Singing with the same ecstasy as when  
Upon my heart this avalanche of pain  
In awful silence had not fallen. Oh !  
Tears have been token, since three years ago,  
How infinite love's grieving, and how vain.  
Yet if the angels smile on him to-day  
(All tenderer for the knowledge he is eight),  
If lilies whiten in his rapturous way,  
What is it, then, that I am desolate ?  
I think (perchance as crown to heavenly bliss)  
That Christ will give my boy his birthday kiss.

HIS NINTH BIRTHDAY.

O birds ! that cleave the pallid mists of spring,  
The skies' clear azure making glad your way,  
Stay your full transport as you turn to sing !  
For unchecked song my grieving heart would slay :  
    My little child is dead ;  
    Sing softly, birds, to-day !

The earth had waked to bloom when first I knew  
His pure, soft presence ; on my heart he lay,  
Bringing great peace, as God's white angels do, —  
A dream of Heaven that Heaven has borne away.

Wild flowers have come again ;  
    Sing softly, birds, to-day !

The springtime is too beautiful to bear :  
In the warm sunshine, every separate ray  
Sharp pierces me, as with a new despair ;  
The fair, sweet violets seem unplucked to stay,  
    Waiting for childish hands ;  
    Sing softly, birds, to-day !

Yet Love's strong flood, grown infinite with tears,  
May, surging onward in resistless way,  
Sweep up to Heaven the anguish of these years,  
And in its might the eternal gateways sway :

Peace may be mine at last ;  
Sing softly, birds, to-day !

HIS TENTH BIRTHDAY.

The snowdrops have come back to early spring,  
Lifting their shy sweet faces to the sun,  
And with their marvellous faint perfumes bring  
A passionate remembrance of one  
Who has gone far away,—  
The little fair-haired child who would be ten to-day.  
  
The great sad moon watched with me through the  
night,  
While I was weeping that I could not know,  
When the white dawn should come, the pure delight  
Of pillowing his dear head where, long ago,  
In boyish grace he lay,—  
The little fair-haired child who would be ten to-day.

Upon the distant hill-tops lies the snow,  
All shining white, 'bove which, on daring wing,  
The birds sweep high, and in the sunny glow,  
Seeing the spring swift gliding, sing,

                  Wondering one flower's delay,—  
The little fair-haired child who would be ten to-day.

What can the spring bring back to me but rain ?  
I cannot 'neath its soft blue skies forget.  
The crocuses that flame bring fires of pain,  
That, leaping, burn my heart with fierce regret ;

                  The snowdrops will not stay,—  
Lay them upon his grave, who would be ten to-day.

HIS ELEVENTH BIRTHDAY.

You came with singing of the birds, O child !  
And the few springs that in mine eyes you smiled,  
The brimming measure of life's joy I knew ;  
And each sweet birthday, as you lovelier grew,  
I held you closer, seeing in your face  
Something diviner than its childish grace,  
Till nearer, nearer bliss your soul's wings beat,  
And then — you vanished, sweet !

And now the happy years that you have known  
The angels' care outnumbering those have grown  
In which your little life with mine was blent ;  
But I — I have sore missed you since you went.  
And yet, though grieving, still I give you joy  
That you are sheltered in the fold, my boy,  
And shining hosts may know in heavenly way,  
You are eleven to-day !

Oh, vanished child ! each softly budding spring,  
In which the bluebirds passionately sing,  
The sacrament of grief anew I take ;  
And yet, because earth's pain can never shake  
Your soul to such despair — I am content.  
Your whole pure life in glory will be spent,  
And on celestial hills, with glad young feet,  
God safely leads you, sweet !

HIS TWELFTH BIRTHDAY.

The years have onward swept ;  
And radiant springs that would not be denied  
Have come and gone since that last birthday, kept  
Before my child, with heavenly smiling, died ;  
And now, once more, sweet tumults fill the air,  
As stir of growing things that break sod unaware.

Again, Earth's tears that flow  
Are changed to violets (in the sunshine's gold),  
That, wrapt in their own purple shadowings, grow  
In the same sheltered places as of old.  
Again, the birds, with untired breasts, awake,  
Crowning their silences with song's divine outbreak.

The swelling buds, the grass  
On the far hill-tops springing fresh and green,  
And even the rifts of snow (that sunbeams pass  
As if forgetting), — all again are seen ;  
And the same heavens look down with unchanged  
blue,  
Though they have hidden from me the fairest  
flower that grew.

Yes : spring returns the same,  
Yet not the same ; for wherefore all the rest, —  
The rushing life that, passionate, makes claim  
To throb itself to wild flowers on Earth's breast,  
The violets, birds, sunshine, or grass, — when he,  
More beautiful than spring, never comes back to  
me ?

HIS THIRTEENTH BIRTHDAY.

Fast fall my tears to-day, though time has thrown  
Over my bitter pain its healing mist,  
And memory of my noble boy has grown  
Like a sweet dream, in which oftentimes I kissed  
An angel, all my own.

Fair springs have come and gone, and bloom and  
shine  
Of sunny summers, since he went away,  
And I but think of him as one divine ;  
Yet sometimes lightnings of hot grief will play,  
Scathing this heart of mine.

For when I see the flowers come back again,  
My soul is glad, until I swift recall  
That with the violet eyes of spring he came,  
And then despair and love and longing all  
Leap suddenly to flame.

Oh, my lost child ! you are with spring so blent,  
I watch for you when it comes back to me ;  
But well I know that wheresoe'er you went  
You are my own, and Death as Life must be  
                        God's unsolved mystery.

HIS FOURTEENTH BIRTHDAY.

When tulips are aflame,  
And yellow jonquils gild the edge of spring ;  
When loosened torrents down the mountain swing,  
Then comes a day my sacred tears to claim, —

His birthday, who once scanned  
The soaring bluebird with a radiant gaze,  
And watched the blossoms through the sunny days,  
Until his short, sweet life seemed rainbow-spanned.

Just on the edge of spring  
He strayed to heaven, — it was not far to go ;  
Smiling, he saw its skies diviner glow,  
And climbed, on fairer than a bluebird's wing.

And, though my tears fall fast,  
I know how large yon sphere, — I am content :  
Eternal rapture, through my child's soul sent,  
May flood my own, and give him back at last.

**HIS FIFTEENTH BIRTHDAY.**

I trod with you Arcadian fields one day,  
Oh, child divine ! the sunshine at our feet ;  
And saw the clouds that floated far away,  
On the blue breast of heaven in silence meet :  
God never made a day more goldenly complete.

I watched the flaming sunset while it grew  
And twilight bore a star upon its breast ;  
Into mine own, your childish palms I drew,  
With love too infinite to be expressed :  
It seemed an angel's joy to hush you, dear, to rest.

I half forgot what tragedies were mine,  
And love seemed never-ending dream of bliss ;  
My soul was tuned to rapture so divine,  
I had no thought for other Heaven than this :  
In the whole scale of joy there was no note amiss.

No fields Arcadian have been mine to tread,  
Since that fair day ; but thorny paths and steep  
My feet have pressed, oh child ! and your young  
head  
Upon my happy heart I could not keep :  
For, hushed by a diviner Love, you fell asleep.

## HIS TWENTY-FIRST BIRTHDAY.

Sweet, that to-day would be a child no more,  
Hail ! for this golden spring thou wilt put on  
The crown of manhood that thy years have won  
In splendor of yon heaven ! And, raptured, o'er  
Ethereal magnitudes thy soul wilt soar,  
Seeing no glimpse of shadow, but the sun  
Forever shining near, with rays that run  
Irised around thy brow. Yet I, who bore  
Thee on my heart thine earliest, tenderest years,  
May on this birthday only from afar  
Hail thee, beloved ! Therefore fall my tears .  
On violets that the spring grasses star.  
Child ! Man ! Archangel ! When I search the  
spheres,  
My heaven will be where'er thy young smiles are.

THOU ART AN ANGEL.

Thou art an angel, dear !

Or I could never bear thy absence here :  
Hushed are the lips that always spake my name  
With tenderest love, that I can never claim  
To still the trembling of my own ; days go ;  
The laggard hours creep on, down-weighed with  
    woe,  
Yet, wearing into years, have brought this day,  
The second time since thou didst float away,  
    My own ! my own !

Thou art an angel, sweet !

Or else my heart would break, knowing, so fleet  
Thy winging, that my last farewell was caught  
Perchance in blaze of glory seraphs brought.  
Ah ! I have wept so many, many tears  
Since that dread parting that the blissful years  
Of my proud ownership do only seem

As haunting sweetness of a vanished dream !

My own ! my own !

Thou art an angel, love !

If it were not for this belief the dove

Of peace were lost in distance so remote

That I could never hear one fluttering note ;

But now that God has given such high degree,

Recalling it, and that I still may be

Not less thy mother, I can sometimes soar

To resignation, holding thee the more

My heavenly own !

MOONLIGHT.

Through the gray of twilight stealing,  
Shadowy outlined to revealing,  
Like the white, ethereal phantom of a far-off sphere  
    that shone,  
Rose the moon, supremely tender,  
    And, as haunted by the splendor  
Of the day's divine surrender, in a mist it hid its  
    own.

One by one, serenely shining,  
Swift approach of night divining,  
Dropt, as from some sky above them, in a flooding  
    shower of gold,  
Rose the stars, with colors burning,  
    And the passion of their yearning,  
In an ecstasy discerning, from the moon its misting  
    roll'd.

Then, across the full sea's flowing,  
Sprang a channel, wider growing,  
Clasping with its silver shining deeps that poured  
from shore ;  
And with maze of glory blending,  
Slender bars of light ascending,  
To the white heavens over-bending, scaled the  
crystal heart it bore :  
  
And with sadness swept to weeping,  
I remembered one rapt sleeping,  
With the illumined moonbeams streaming like a  
halo round his head,  
Never, radiant wooed, to waken,  
Crowned with silence never shaken,  
By the angels overtaken, and I — grieving by the  
dead.

## JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE.

JUNE 8, 1888.

Beeches are bowed with royal gloom ;  
Round fresh young ferns soft shadows play ;  
Bending with wealth of violet bloom

The wild geraniums sway ;  
Like attar'd sunshine, lit to wings,  
The butterflies gay haunt the air, —  
Thin phantoms of celestial things  
Light floating everywhere.

“ The world is passing fair,” I say, —  
“ But oh for yesterday ! ”

The clustering barberry blossoms swing  
To rhythmic flow of breezes soft,  
And from their amber petals fling  
Their perfumed souls aloft.

The birds sing mad’ningly in flight ;  
The heavens are all ablaze with blue ;

The sun throbs — passionate with light —  
Like June's heart beating through.  
“The world is passing fair” I say, —  
“But oh for yesterday !”

Yes : summer, all too fair, is here !  
And to mine eyes the hot tears start ;  
For one, divine as June, and dear,  
    Lies dead, — on June's warm heart.  
Oh, fitting that his poet head  
Here rest, with thoughts immortal given,  
And that his saintly soul be led  
    Through bloom of June to Heaven !  
“The world is fair, too fair,” I say, —  
“ And oh for yesterday ! ”

MEMORIAL DAY, 1885.

It is not hero's grave where I would lay,  
The pure white lilies I have plucked to-day  
With scalding tears ;  
But grave of one who died in boyish years ;  
Who to a noble manhood might have grown,  
And foremost in the ranks of glory shone,  
And brave as bravest soldier might have lain,  
After the heat and smoke of battle, slain  
As Christ for brother men ;  
Yet even then,  
Grown to a higher faith, I might have borne the  
pain.  
  
But that my little child went out alone  
Into the great and infinite unknown,  
Seems hard to bear —  
While strains of martial music rent the air.  
Four years to-day, I saw the soft eyes close

With white despair ; yet even in repose  
His soul seemed listening, and the notes that fell  
Froze into silence of divine farewell ;

Out of foreknowledge deep  
(Too fair to keep),

Before his feet were tired, "God gave my darling  
sleep."

Oh, mothers ! torn with passionate regrets,  
The while you place your mourning violets,

Do I not know

The graves whereon the wild flowers softly blow  
Hold portions of your heaven ? For I can claim  
Kinship with each of you in Sorrow's name.

Let me among your number stand, as one  
Who has given up her last remaining son ;

Only my children died  
Close by my side;

And long, sweet years you knew I weep because  
denied.

## SORROW.

You sing, "When summer comes ;" ah, love, what  
then ?

It will not bring the roses back again  
From summer's dead :

It will not come till the pale spring has shed  
Its many tears, and whitened lilies lay  
Folded upon the pulseless heart of May :  
Then, other flowers may grow, and long days pass,  
Gracing the earth with the soft, springing grass ;  
Thrushes may sing, and singing, make their claim  
To nests low builded ; morning flowers may flame ;  
Yet summer, when it comes, will never be the same.

You sing "When summer comes ;" what then ? I  
know

The fairest summers only come and go ;  
Bliss does not last.

You cannot win me from my saddened past ;  
Yet I remember when my heart upsprang,

Catching the ecstasy of birds that sang ;  
When the great hush, that filled expectant days,  
Swept me to purest calm ; when the soft haze  
Seemed sent to veil earth's throbbing joy so great,  
(As rapture sometimes does itself create  
A mist of sadness) when I dared to claim  
A part in Nature's whole ; and autumn came ; —  
After one autumn, summer cannot seem the same.

Nay ! waiting bloom can never bring to grief  
The old, sweet thrill : Promise that made belief.

Doubt finds a place,  
Where Death has left such bitter, bitter space.  
Oh, Singer ! life seems all too sad a thing ;  
I miss the lilies of the vanished spring,  
And tender words that never can be said ;  
I miss the roses of my summer's dead :  
The subtle essence of love's past is pain ;  
Yet reaching Heaven, God may distil again,  
And a long summer come, that Death shall not  
profane.

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